The New REPUBLIC

A Journal of Opinion

VOL. XLVIII NEW YORK, WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 1926 NUMBER 616

Contents

The Week 104

Editorials

America and the League's New Phase..... 106
Railroad Prosperity 108
Government by Publicity 110

General Articles

Pauline Lord.....Elizabeth Shepley Sergeant 112
Fable (verse).....George O'Neil 115
Mexico's Educational Renaissance.....John Dewey 116
Teacher's Pet.....Adelaide Morey Kellogg 118
Women on the Housetops.....Stark Young 121
Little Boy Blue (verse).....John Crowe Ransom 122

Correspondence 123

Reviews of Books

Wyndham Lewis's Ulysses....Robert Morss Lovett 124
Values and Obligations.....Isabel Leavenworth 125
Brawnyman .....R. L. 126
New Fiction 127

The Week

HAVING failed to arouse any interest with Mr. Cordell Hull's attack on the Republican prosperity issue, the Democrats are now apparently preparing to bid for favor by Senator Simmons's plan to cash in on prosperity. There is no easier and cheaper way to buy votes than to pay for them out of the public treasury; the treasury now has an indicated surplus of about $560,000,000; what could be simpler than a proposal to pass it around by another tax reduction? Add to this the old statement of a Republican "plot" to hold up a possible reduction until just before the elections of 1928, and you have a first class issue for politicians who are hard pressed for something to say and don't want to raise really embarrassing questions. If the proposal is to be taken seriously, however, it is far too simple. The surplus for the fiscal year ending in June, 1926, was about $378,000,000; that for the fiscal year ending in June, 1927, is now estimated at $185,000,000. By adding these together Senator Simmons gets his $560,000,000. But a large part of the $378,000,000 has already been used for retirement of the war debt. And the Senator's proposal is to reduce future taxes, not really to hand out a dividend out of surplus. Suppose the results of the fiscal year 1928 are, contrary to all informed predictions, no worse than those for 1927—in other words that a surplus for the year of $185,000,000 would arise, with no tax reduction. Senator Simmons proposes, as we understand it, to cut annual receipts by $560,000,000. That would leave a deficit of nearly $400,000,000. Such a deficit might be embarrassing to the Republicans, but they would have little difficulty in fixing the responsibility for it.

LIKEWISE Senator Simmons's plea that future generations should help pay for the War is both old bunkum and poor policy. The generation which fought the War paid its full cost in men, effort and goods. The financial obligations which arose from war borrowing merely are making those of us who do not own large quantities of federal bonds pay for it again, twice over. The size of this multiplied cost will be increased according as the government takes a longer time to retire the principal. What private person, having ample means to retire a debt, would choose to postpone its payment and thus pile up for himself future charges of interest? It will cost less to retire the bonds as rapidly as possible, and to do so will clear the decks for a period when we may be less able to pay or have to incur new obligations. And to count on future enlarged receipts from Allied debts, as Senator Simmons does, is foolish in view of the possibilities of transfer. The Democrats lost their chance at a sound taxation issue when they failed to oppose the last reductions in the higher brackets carried out by the Republicans. We can see no good opportunity to reduce direct taxes for the mass of the people, or even to reduce indirect taxes by tariff reform, except by placing a heavier burden on large incomes and profits. Because they deserted their time-honored principle of taxing wealth according to its ability to pay, the Democrats cannot now attempt to lighten tax burdens without incurring the responsibility for possible deficits and short-sighted finance.

THE situation in China is becoming exceedingly grave. The Canton government has taken the offensive against Wu Pei-fu, and has succeeded in ousting him from Hankow, a fact which is certain to endanger his relations with his pragmatic fellow

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tuchun, Chang Tso-lin. In the north, the actions of Chang himself are the subject of strenuous objections by Russia, and an ugly quarrel is developing, which is the more serious because the Manchurian warlord has the unofficial backing of Japan. It is the British, however, who are most deeply involved in the incidents of the past week. In several places, Chinese snipers have fired on British vessels, and two ships were seized with their crews. A rescuing expedition was sent out, and fighting of the most desperate character followed. Several British sailors were killed and there were about 300 Chinese casualties. Thereupon His Majesty's Ship Cockchafer shelled the town where the incident took place, Wanhsien. Forty six-inch shells were dropped, and according to Japanese reports which seem to be accepted by the British as correct, there were 5,000 casualties. Since the inhabitants were given no warning, it is altogether likely that most of these 5,000 persons killed and wounded were non-combatant men, women and children. An incident like this, happening anywhere in Europe or America, would set the whole world on fire; but through generations we have been accustomed to assume that the Chinese do not enjoy the ordinary rights of human beings. At the same time, this sort of procedure may help us to understand why the flame of hatred against the foreigner and all his ways is rising ever higher in the Orient.

IT IS amusing to read that American officials in Germany have discovered that German steel manufacturers are selling their products in the United States not only far below current American prices, but below the prices for the same product in the German market. This brings into operation the anti-dumping tariff provision, and increased tariffs on German steel will probably be recommended. The amusement comes in when we remember that the demand for German reparations can be met only by a surplus of German exports, that Germany cannot have a surplus of exports unless she can undersell her competitors abroad, and that on the basis of her assent to the Dawes plan American capital has invested heavily in and loaned to German industry—especially iron and steel. We demand that Germany pay, we lend her the money with which to provide the means of payment—and then when payment begins to be made we propose to bar it out by increased tariffs. The whole transaction is such a transparent delusion that one wonders how soon the American capitalist as foreign investor and the American capitalist as manufacturing magnate will confront himself and recognize his dual personality.

THE best news from France for many a day is that the Poincaré government is beginning a program of reducing the army by cutting off the rolls 2,700 permanent and 1,200 temporary officers, raising the minimum age of conscripts from twenty to twenty-one in preparation for reducing the term of training to one year, curtailing the mounted troops and abandoning about 170 military establishments. The economies thus made possible will not be important in comparison with the budget deficit, though they are in the right direction. More significant is the deflation of the military spirit, the sign of a gradual preparation for peace and accommodation rather than for war and force. Acts of this sort will do more to conciliate American opponents of war debt reduction like Senator Borah than all the letters Clemenceau can write.

SPAIN has joined Brazil in resigning from the League of Nations. The delegates at Geneva in effect had to choose between gaining Germany and losing Spain, and we think there can be no question that their decision was a wise one. After all, the defection of both Spain and Brazil is likely to prove only a temporary one. Two years' notice is required before a resignation becomes effective; and much may happen in that time. The Primo de Rivera government in Spain has apparently come safely through its latest crisis; but European observers are almost unanimous in predicting that it will not last much longer, and it is not unreasonable to hope that the régime which succeeds it may prove more amenable. In both these cases the country needs the League more than the League needs the country. Offended national dignity may demand a peremptory resignation; but that is by no means incompatible with a quiet return after the lapse of a few months.

THE trial of former Attorney General Harry M. Daugherty and former Alien Property Custodian Thomas W. Miller has been chiefly remarkable thus far as a lawyers' battle. Every inch of the ground is being hotly contested by the batteries of famous attorneys on both sides. It has been established that $441,000 was paid to the late John T. King, former member of the Republican National Committee from Connecticut, by the German owners of the American Metal Company, in the course of their efforts to get the return of their property, sequestrated by the government. Richard Merton, a German, who conducted the negotiations on behalf of the owners, now asserts that paying Mr. King this sum was his own idea, that it was regarded as a commission, not a bribe, and that he had no knowledge of any improper use of the money or any part thereof. It remains for United States Attorney Buckner to prove, if he can, that the money or some part of it passed into the hands of the persons on trial, and that this transaction if it took place bore a definite relationship to the action of the Alien Property Custodian.

WHILE the public is absorbed by the exposition of the methods by which Merton secured the release of the property of the American Metal Com-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

pany from the hands of the Alien Property Custodian, it has no consideration for the thousands of other foreign claimants whose property is still withheld. Merton stated that he needed his $7,000,000 to preserve the solvency of his company, and under advice of those familiar with American conduct of large enterprises he engaged a politician to handle the matter and paid $441,000. What of the thousands of others who likewise need their property to preserve solvency or even life itself, who did not pretend to Swiss or other neutral ownership and who, unlike Merton, are awaiting its due and orderly release? The failure to return all sequestered property promptly was in defiance of general international comity and of treaty agreements. Its administration in the hands of custodians Palmer, Garvan and Miller has involved such scandals as the sale of the German patents, the Bosch-Magneto fraud, and the American Metal affair. But worse than all else the American people, by their complacent acquiescence in the action taken under Wilson and the inaction under the succeeding administrations, have been and continue to be a party to proceedings which are dishonorable and dishonest.

ON September 13 began the hearing upon the motion for a new trial of Sacco and Vanzetti before Judge Thayer, the original trial judge. The earlier hearing was devoted largely to the evidence on which the conviction was based. The present motion is supported by much new evidence, none of which was available at the time of the trial. To grant it will involve no reflection upon the earlier proceedings. In view of the interest which has been excited the world over by this case, and the widespread doubt of the guilt of the accused, it seems unbelievable that Judge Thayer should not vindicate his own fairness and the integrity of judicial practice in Massachusetts by granting the motion. There will be a sense of relief on the part of all believers in the sanctity of law and of human life if these Italians are given a new opportunity to present their case to a jury.

THE New Republic has repeatedly suggested that the prosecution of Sacco and Vanzetti was inspired by the Department of Justice at Washington, which under A. Mitchell Palmer was pursuing illegal practices against persons whom it regarded as pro-German or revolutionary in sympathy. Sacco and Vanzetti were obnoxious to the Department not only because of their radicalism but because of their activities in behalf of their countryman, Salsedo, who came to death while illegally in custody of federal agents. Confirmation of this suspicion is afforded by the investigations of Mr. W. G. Thompson, counsel for Sacco and Vanzetti, who found close coöperation between the agents of the Department of Justice at Boston, and Katzmann, the District Attorney who prosecuted. Mr. Thompson applied to Attorney General Sargent for permission to examine the files of the Boston office of the Department at the time of the original trial. Mr. Sargent refused. Comment is unnecessary.

FOR the last few years there has been a steady decrease in the number of lynchings recorded against the people of the United States. It is a melancholy fact that the first eight months of 1926 show a larger number of such occurrences than in the entire year 1925, 20 against 18. Two of the twenty victims, however, were white. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People places the responsibility for this increase upon the failure of the Senate to act favorably upon the Dyer Anti-Lynching bill. The nationwide campaign in support of the bill, and the prospect of its passage, undoubtedly stimulated local authorities to special effort to restrain mob lawlessness. The relaxation of these efforts, following the exhibition of indifference and hostility to federal legislation, has resulted in the loss of ground which had been gained. The campaign in behalf of such legislation must be carried on with renewed vigor if the country is to be saved from lapsing into the disgraceful situation from which it seemed slowly emerging.

THE responsibility for the continuation of the British coal strike is fairly upon the shoulders of the mine owners, who have rejected the terms put forward with the sanction of the government, and propose to stand out for regional agreements. This action gives emphasis to the appeals for support of the striking miners. The A. F. of L. has endorsed the effort to raise funds. Says President William Green: "We consider the British miners' fight as a challenge to the worldwide attempt to smash labor standards." Further, the Executive Council asks all unions to give to the limit of their ability. In reply to Premier Baldwin's assertion that the miners do not need assistance, the Council declares that "suffering among the miners' families is intense." Contributions may be send to Miss Evelyn Preston, 70 Fifth Avenue, New York.

America and the League's New Phase

IT IS inevitable that the entrance of Germany into the League of Nations should bring about a revival of interest in the relation of the United States to the Geneva body. In the recent past, that question has been rather thoroughly defunct. The pro-League organizations and individuals in the United States, while publicly keeping a brave front, have privately admitted that they felt their struggle was a hopeless one, at least for a long time to come. Their drooping spirits revived a little during the World Court fight, but the subsequent course of events has been anything but reassuring to them.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

One World Court Senator after another has been defeated in the primaries; and while some of these failures have been due to other issues, such movement of public opinion as can be discerned has seemed to be toward the position of the irreconcilables. While the United States is coöperating in numerous League activities of a humanitarian nature, and has even gone so far as to participate in the preliminary conference on limitation of armament, no candid student of the situation can deny that we are at least as far away from accepting full membership in the League now as we were in, say, 1922. And it is, of course, full membership which the American pro-Leaguers and the European member nations want.

With Germany in, how does the situation stand? Marshaling the points on the side of the pessimists first, we may begin by reminding ourselves that Russia is still outside the League and in an attitude of hostility to it. No lasting European settlement can be made which does not take Russia into account; and the League will never achieve full usefulness until Moscow is represented. The difference in point of view between communist Russia and the "capitalistic" western powers is not so great an obstacle as is sometimes supposed: in international relations the policy of the Moscow government (as distinguished from that of the Third International) is much less communistic than Russian. And yet it is obvious that getting Russia into the League means a much more difficult undertaking than getting Germany in.

Another unfavorable element, of which much is likely to be heard in the future, arises from the growing belief that what the world needs is not one League of Nations but at least two and possibly three or more. When the agitation for American entrance into the Geneva body was at its height, there was a general assumption that the most efficient and desirable form of world organization was a single league. Today there is an increasing group of persons holding the point of view well stated in Count Coudenhove-Kalergi's book, Pan-Europe. They believe that the world is too large a place to have its problems brought together into a single place; that most international troubles are between neighbors, and can best be settled in the neighborhood. This school of thought holds that there should be at least a Pan-American League of Nations and an Asiatic one, in addition to the Geneva organization. These would coöperate when any question arose between a member of one and a member of another; but otherwise, each would rule its own part of the world. It is not impossible that this doctrine, rather than the obstructionism of the irreconcilables, may be the chief argument used in the future against the American friends of full membership in the "European league."

Another difficulty which remains as yet unabated is the use of the League by the Allies as the executing agent for many of the clauses of the treaties of 1919. This is a question about which it is dangerous to generalize; but it is probable that a large section of American opinion regards these treaties as to a considerable extent unjust and unworkable. Our pro-League propagandists have met this objection in the past by admitting that it is true but arguing that with America a member the League would for the first time be able to go about the task of getting these unjust provisions of the treaties remedied. Such an argument, needless to say, appeals only to those who are already in love with the organization; it is not one which will persuade a person who has opposed the League on this very ground.

A phase of the League's work which has done it harm in the past in America and continues unreformed is the administration of the mandate system. While some of the mandates are no doubt well conducted and well supervised, there is a strong impression in the United States that some others, such as that of France in Syria and Great Britain in Mesopotamia, mean little if anything different from the old imperialistic game of spheres of influence, protectorates and colonies. Here again the friends of the League are only able to reply that without the Geneva organization the same territories would be even worse administered by the same powers—an argument which appeals only to strictly pragmatic-minded people.

The argument of the pro-Leaguers is made more difficult again, by the fact that the organization is today face to face with a deadly foe in the form of Fascism. Mussolini has never liked the League, and doesn't now. He is extending the power of Italy, in an anti-League spirit, through treaties or understandings with Spain, Jugoslavia, Greece, Hungary and Rumania. In each of these countries there is a group corresponding to the blackshirt society, and in at least three of them it is in control of the government. The "philosophy" of Fascismo is opposed to the philosophy of the League; the practices of Mussolini, as the Corfu incident told us, are likely to be in opposition to the League's procedure whenever he believes his interests are advanced thereby. In theory, this serious threat to the future of the League ought to make the people of the United States doubly eager to come to Geneva's aid, since Fascism is a system in direct opposition to the theoretical democratic basis on which our government is founded. Actually, however, this threat to the League's future is to most Americans a powerful argument against our coming in.

These are the main arguments against reconsideration of our national attitude toward the League; what is there to be put into the opposite side of the scale? First of all, there is the fact that with the entrance of Germany, the most potent argument of the irreconcilables loses its force. That was the possible danger that "American boys would again be sent to shed their blood on European soil

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

in settlement of a purely European quarrel." In so far as this contention was based on the League, it was spurious: the danger that through League membership we might be required to send troops to Europe was on the whole less than it would be if there were no League. However, the Locarno agreements which now for the first time come into force will, if they are sincerely carried out, diminish the danger of another general European conflagration. From the point of view of every American group, the League reinforced by Locarno is much more desirable than the League alone.

Again, as regards the enforcement of the treaties of 1919 the entrance of Germany automatically begins a new phase in the League's history, even though it may take some years for this development to show itself completely. Germany will undoubtedly bring up one by one the main grievances growing out of the Treaty of Versailles and the other post-war settlements: the occupation of the Rhineland, the administration of the Saar, the reparation payments, the restoration of some if not all of her colonies and finally the war guilt question itself, on which, in theory at least, the most onerous clauses of the Versailles treaty were based. It would be quixotic to expect any rapid development in regard to any of these questions. France is moving in the direction of reconciliation—aided by the new economic entente which has sprung up between her own and the German heavy industry—but she will travel the road slowly, and in the meantime she can veto in the League Council any important action which appears to be contrary to her own interest. Yet it is undeniable, and of the greatest importance, that she has abandoned her policy in the first years of post-war hysteria, which was to keep the ancient foe permanently prostrate.

Another important advance which may be expected if the Locarno treaties are faithfully executed is limitation of armament. This is a subject in which America, partly for sentimental and partly for economic reasons, has a peculiar interest. The same forces which brought an irresistible pressure to bear on Messrs. Harding and Hughes in 1921 and forced them to call an arms conference which in the beginning neither of them wanted, are still operative. No one has ever accused Mr. Coolidge of not keeping his finger on the public pulse; it is noteworthy that in spite of his coldness toward any new "European entanglements" he has repeatedly suggested the calling of another Washington conference, and violated precedent to the extent of sending an official American delegation to the preliminary conference at Geneva. Locarno, plus German membership in the League, makes it possible for the first time to give serious consideration to a drastic reduction in European armament; and the League offers a machinery for bringing this about, so convenient that it will prove indispensable.

These various arguments combine themselves into a final one which in the long run should prove the most effective of all. The entrance of Germany, if it is followed by the several events predicted, including the admission of Russia, will for the first time give the League the hope of becoming in reality what its American friends have been saying it was for the past six years. While a few of the opponents of American participation have argued that we should keep out of any society of nations, no matter how good, most of the objection has come from those who agree that American participation in an ideal association would be desirable but have opposed the existing League as such and because of the soil from which it has sprung. If the League alters—as it is permissible to believe that it will—in the direction American critics have desired, it will become increasingly difficult for them to maintain the desirability of our permanently standing aloof.

Railroad Prosperity

THE financial page of every newspaper tells us that the railroads are doing well. Weekly figures of freight carloads establish continual records. There are few car shortages. Service is, on the whole, prompt and far more satisfactory than a few years ago. And the increases in gross earnings are not matched by corresponding increases in expenses, so that net operating income piles up. Net for almost every month of 1926 has exceeded the same month of 1925, which was the most profitable year since the War. The first seven months of this year showed an aggregate return of 5.06 percent on the aggregate book value of Class I roads—this is the value the companies themselves put on their properties. July brought a return of 5.62 percent. There is little doubt that the net operating income for the year will equal or exceed the 5.75 percent which the Interstate Commerce Commission has specified as a fair return on its tentative valuation, which is somewhat smaller than the railroads' own book value.

Of course there is a chance that this is merely a temporary peak accompanying unusual prosperity, which will vanish in a year or two if we suffer a trade depression. Yet there is no denying that a large part of the gains are due to better equipment and more efficient operation, whose effects would be felt even with a diminution of traffic. Certainly as long as general prosperity lasts, and perhaps longer, the aspect of the railroad problem has been altered by the climb out of the region of low return.

The problems of regulation used to centre about the provision of adequate service without uneconomically high rates or unfairly low wages. Roads which could not make a sufficient return suffered difficulty in spending enough to provide good service, in maintaining tracks and equipment, and in attracting the new capital necessary for additions and improvements. Many roads even faced the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

danger of bankruptcy and possible discontinuance. Provisions of the Transportation act providing for consolidation and recapture were discussed chiefly in their relation to this situation. In so far as consolidation could strengthen weak properties, it would help. And if the government could recapture from the systems making more than a fair return one-half of their excess, it could lend the proceeds to the weaker companies on easy terms. For these reasons the slow and illogical progress of consolidation, and the long delay in beginning recapture seemed dangerous to some observers. Of course there are still weak roads which suffer from capital shortage. But as average profits grow, the problem presented by inequality of earning power begins to shift. It is no longer so much a question of keeping the poorer systems out of bankruptcy or furnishing them with necessary capital. It is a question of limiting the more prosperous roads to something within gunshot of a fair return without unduly reducing the earnings of the marginal properties, which on present rates begin to earn enough. It is a question of raising wages as much as would seem fair on the money-making lines without boosting the wage-bills of the weaker ones too much.

Railroad systems such as the New York Central are now as profitable as many unregulated industrial corporations which are not regarded as public utilities and are permitted an unlimited return, on the theory that competitive market processes will keep their prices down to a reasonable figure. The New York Central has not only increased its dividend rate materially, but it has set aside large slices of its profit to the surplus account and has materially enhanced the value of its property out of earnings. It has been able to sell new issues of common stock on the market in competition with the best of the unregulated industrial concerns. Theoretically, if it were engaged in a competitive business selling a commercial article, instead of holding a partial monopoly on an essential public service, it could and probably would go after the trade of its competitors by lowering prices, and would attract the necessary labor for its expanded operation by paying a premium over the wage rates of others in the same business. Its continued profits would result from a larger volume of sales, and would rest solely on the measure of what superior efficiency it might have. And the public and labor would share in its advances. But being a regulated utility, its prosperity does not result in this way. It does not and cannot lower its rates below those set by the public authorities who must keep in view the requirement of other railroads not making so much. And it sturdily resists advances in wages over the prevailing rates partly because the bankers, executives and stockholders who control it are reluctant to embarrass other and less prosperous carriers which would be called upon to follow suit.

However effective consolidation or recapture might be in preserving the weaker roads in times of depression, they are bound to be ineffective in distributing the surplus earnings of profitable roads in a time of prosperity. No railroad company in its right senses would, if it were making a large return, combine with one making a small return with the view to sharing its profit with other stockholders, the public and labor. And if the Interstate Commerce Commission should make its way through the legal entanglements which have so far prevented the application of the recapture clause, it could not under the present law apply the recaptured funds to the earnings of weaker roads so that they might prosper on reduced rates or higher wages. It could merely lend the money to them for investments which might or might not increase their earning power more than enough to pay the interest on the loan. If the use of borrowed funds would materially increase their earning power, these roads could undoubtedly secure ample credit from private sources. So that the recaptured funds would have no use. The tendency under increasing prosperity seems to be for railroad profits to rise until even the weakest companies have enough, and the more fortunate ones earn almost unlimited returns.

Similar new difficulties arise with rate setting under prosperity. The simple-minded advocate of regulation under the Transportation act would suppose that after railroad profits had reached a certain point, it would be an easy matter for the Interstate Commerce Commission to reduce rates. But when rate revision is seriously suggested the railroad interests have several alibis. They will point out, first, that never before since the passage of the Transportation act have they enjoyed an aggregate return on their tentative valuation equal to the 5.75 percent which the Interstate Commerce Commission has specified as fair. Should one year of excess return be held to balance five years of less than fair? Should not the return be averaged over a period of time, so that there may be five fat years to balance five lean ones? Tremendous pressure will be brought to bear in behalf of this theory. If it is accepted, the chances are we shall have to wait until 1930 to strike an average, and then until 1935 to see what further profits may be made, before a general rate reduction is considered. And when a certain rate of profit has been established that long, it is extremely difficult to lower it. What should we not hear about the widows and orphans who had bought railroad stock at the high levels and ought not be cheated of their investment?

Another alibi consists in the uncertainty of the valuation base on which the rate of return is to be reckoned. It would be comparatively simple to alter railroad rates as earnings change so that a certain rate of return might be maintained, if the value on which the return were based were fixed and known. It could be fixed and known if it were calculated on the basis of the original prudent cost of the investment, less depreciation. But neither the Commission nor the courts have adhered to this

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

method. They have come much closer to the cost of reproduction at present. This cost is always changing and cannot be exactly known at any given moment without an interminable series of complex revaluations which take time to establish. The practical result is that it would be virtually impossible for the Commission to cut rates without the railroads being offered an opportunity to delay and challenge its action with a plea in the courts that the new rates were confiscatory. The chances are all in favor of the railroads, like other public utilities, pumping up their valuation by one device or another as their net earnings increase, and thus always keeping the percentage rate of return within the so-called "fair" limit. In fact, their chances of marketing common stock in competition with the foremost industrial shares, which, as everyone knows, derive a large part of their speculative value from the fact that they benefit from the great capital accretions of the companies, would be slim indeed unless the railroads likewise managed to capitalize growing earnings.

Unless such difficulties can be overcome, some of the chief purposes of the Transportation act will be defeated. We may at some future date have occasion to look with envy at our neighbor to the North, which owns a great railroad system and so does not have to invent intricate devices of regulation and valuation in order to make sure that all share fairly in the gains of improved transportation.

Government by Publicity

DURING the first two months of President Coolidge's summer vacation, the telegraph wires carried away from White Pine Camp 1,609,739 words, or an average of 25,963.5 a day. Five telegraph operators were installed at the camp and twenty-four hour service was maintained. We hardly needed the confirmation by a telegraph company official to know that this breaks all records for any Presidential vacation in history.

With what did these 1,609,739 words deal? Not with President Coolidge's life in camp, for that could be reported in a diurnal paragraph on a standard schedule: Monday and Thursday, catches hitherto unknown fish (specially planted in lake by State Fish Commission); Tuesday and Friday, makes a pal of his guide; Wednesday and Saturday, walks pal to death in woods. Neither was this volume of wordage consumed in interviews with the President; for by a long-standing rule he is never interviewed. What then, occupied the time and energies of these five heroic pounders of the key?

We shall make no more mystery of a matter which to every boy and girl, as far back as the last row, is no mystery at all. It was the White House Spokesman who was responsible for 97 percent of all this syllabic Niagara. In Washington, in winter, this mysterious gentleman who wears the President's clothes, uses his desk and yet is so remote from him that the two are never seen in the same room at the same time, receives the newspaper correspondents twice a week, on Tuesdays and Fridays; but at Paul Smith's he is on the job every day but Sunday. Moreover, he has fewer competitors for public attention than in the winter: an occasional Trudy or Rudy comes along as a claimant for front page space; but these have their day and disappear while the Spokesman goes on forever. And how he does go on! Is there anything on earth he doesn't know all about and expound, offhand but definitively? If there is, the correspondents tactfully omit to mention it. Today he has a formula for farm relief. Tomorrow he is assuring the country that prosperity is to be the only issue in the campaign this fall, and that Republicanism and Riches begin with the same letter. Wednesday he pins great hope to the preliminary conference at Geneva on possible limitation of some kinds of armament some day, perhaps. One week he feels that Mexican laws affecting American property should be watched carefully; another he delivers himself of the view that there is no necessity for revising the tariff—or in fact, for doing anything else in the slightest degree objectionable to the emperors of industry.

Our readers will perhaps be surprised and undoubtedly pained to learn that the Spokesman shares the general lot of humankind and is often misunderstood—oh, so cruelly misunderstood. There was, for example, that incident a week ago. The official Ghost made some remarks about the desirability of Europe's reducing her armament. Just what he said will of course never be known. There were no stenographers present; there never are. No official report was made, which could afterward be initialed as correct by the White House Loudspeaker. However, the leading administration newspaper, which certainly has no desire to misinterpret the Spokesman, thought his words justified the headline: Warns Europe to Cut Arms or See U. S. Build Biggest Air Fleet. This sounds to most people like a threat. It was so interpreted, and therefore bitterly resented, in Paris. When news of this resentment was cabled back to the United States the Spokesman hastily but blandly repudiated the whole thing. He had never said it. He had been misinterpreted. The reporters had misunderstood him. One might be sceptical about this, but who could deny it? Where was the official text of this important international utterance? There was none: there were only a few scrawled notes, made by reporters, which even these astute young gentlemen would very likely be unable to decipher once they are cold.

The same sort of thing has happened before, of course, on a number of occasions. There was the incident when Herriot's government fell, and the Presidential Parrot said his troubles had been in-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

herited from his predecessor. There was the tart comment on a speech by M. Jusserand, former French ambassador, dealing with the war debt. There was, to ascend into the more serious realm of business itself, the announcement that President Coolidge would not get a new suit for Easter; and to go still higher to the sacred topic of sport there was the notorious dictum made, however, before the present summer vacation started, that fishing is an enfeebled occupation fit only for children and the aged.

These pronouncements have been selected from almost innumerable others because they share a common history. In each case the Presidential Spooksman said *some*thing. The large group of listening reporters thought it was thus-and-so, and wrote and published accordingly. Thereupon, loud and earnest yowls arose from somebody who felt his toes were stepped on. At once, the Calvinated Shadow reassembled the newspapermen. What he had said was not thus-and-so. Oh, dear, no. It was the exact opposite, such-and-such. He had been misunderstood, etc., etc. He had been misinterpreted, etc., etc.

This situation has its humorous side—except perhaps to the reporters who must, one would imagine, somewhat dislike being called a bunch of dumb-headed ignoramuses or liars or both, every time such a procedure seems to An Uncertain Party desirable. But it is also and primarily a serious one. We are witnessing an innovation unique in all history—government by publicity. No predecessor of Mr. Coolidge ever did anything like it. Mr. Roosevelt was once thought to be something of an expert at such business, but we now see he was a tyro. He never went further than to call in a few of his personal friends among the reporters occasionally, when he had something to impart. Mr. Wilson was the first Chief Executive to try meeting the gentlemen of the press in a body, but almost immediately abandoned the procedure, which was so repugnant to his scholarly and aloof dignity. Mr. Harding for a few months saw the reporters twice a week as Mr. Coolidge does when he is in Washington; but Mr. Harding was too naïve to move the stops of the vast publicity organ with any skill, and (after his famous blunder in the course of the Washington Conference) soon took refuge in a timid answering of a few written questions. He told the reporters a part at least of what they wanted to know; but he did not seize the opportunity to impress upon them, and through them the whole country, the things he wanted to have believed.

That is what is happening today. No ruler in history ever had such a magnificent propaganda machine as Mr. Coolidge's, and certainly it would be impossible for anybody to use it more assiduously. The unanimity with which the press supports him is one of the major phenomena of our time. In Europe governments often control important journals; but everyone knows that this secret and corrupt control exists, so what these papers say is discounted about 95 percent to reach the probable residuum of truth. In America everyone knows that the press is unbought and unbuyable, in the European sense. Therefore when papers large and small of every political faith and in all parts of the country unite to sing the praises of the President and his policies the effect is incalculably more serious. It is bad enough when Congress is in session; but at least, at that time, the hapless public may count upon receiving a little material which may be considered an antidote. Some insurgent Senator or Congressman may usually be relied upon to point out those parts of the Presidential dicta which are most flagrantly not so, and the press associations will carry this dissenting opinion as a matter of news. But with Congress not in session, no contradictory voice is raised. Also, during the summer at least, we get the Voice Behind the Throne six days a week instead of our accustomed two.

To be sure, no one can say just how influential are its preachments. Perhaps we exaggerate their effectiveness, and we hope this is true. One cannot forget, however, that this is the Publicity Age; that a large proportion of the people never read anything except the Bible and the newspapers; and that they are inclined to believe one as much as the other: which is, completely. To such an audience comes the column of matter on the front page of 35,000,000 newspapers every day, linking President: Prosperity, Republicanism: Prosperity, Tariff: Prosperity. This cannot be without an enormous, even if imponderable, effect. Mr. Coolidge is our first really skilful practitioner of government by publicity. The new technique which he has partly borrowed, partly invented, creates a power so vast that it is in our opinion dangerous in the extreme and especially since the newspapers which ought to fight against it tooth and nail as imperiling their own integrity are for the most part meekly subservient to it. It is not impossible that the great task of the next decade will be bringing that power under democratic control.

THE NEW REPUBLIC

PUBLISHED WEEKLY AND COPYRIGHT, 1926, IN THE U. S., BY THE NEW REPUBLIC, INC., 421 WEST 21ST STREET, NEW YORK
HERBERT CROLY, PRESIDENT, DANIEL MEBANE, TREASURER

EDITORS

HERBERT CROLY BRUCE BLIVEN ROBERT LITTELL
ALVIN JOHNSON GEORGE SOULE STARK YOUNG
ROBERT MORSS LOVETT

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

JANE ADDAMS JOHN DEWEY EDMUND WILSON
GILBERT SELDES E. C. LINDEMAN LEO WOLMAN
WALDO FRANK

RATES: SINGLE COPIES, FIFTEEN CENTS; YEARLY SUBSCRIPTION, FIVE DOLLARS; CANADIAN, FIVE DOLLARS AND FIFTY CENTS; FOREIGN, SIX DOLLARS; THREE MONTHS' TRIAL, ONE DOLLAR

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Pauline Lord

One Stung by the Gadfly

PAULINE LORD has the power to create images of feminine desolation that linger for years in the memory. The wavering, visual image which, in They Knew What They Wanted, seemed to symbolize Amy's adaptation to the maze of trouble in which she found herself is still fresh and moving. But who can forget the image of fear —stark, quailing, nauseating fear—that she gave in Samson and Delilah, when she groveled along the wall, to escape the erotic vengeance of Ben Ami? Or the image of tenderness, suppressed and hungry girlish tenderness for a father, triumphing over a pitiful distrust of men in general, that she revealed in the first act of Anna Christie, with nothing more tangible than an arrested phrase in a stale and husky voice, and a flutter of speaking hands?

The impression of her Anna Christie was so final that one can scarcely conceive an Anna built on the strapping, Viking-daughter lines of O'Neill's stage directions. And this is not because of Anna's flat, Minnesota drawl, or any other superficial verisimilitude: it is because of Pauline Lord's accurate and poignant betrayal of emotion. Betrayal, rather than portrayal. This actress reveals emotion unwillingly, as sensitive women do, and with a minimum of instinctive physical movement. Instead of holding up her feelings to the public gaze, she raises a kind of translucent screen between them and the audience. It is by accident that our eyes pierce her reserve; by necessity that our hearts quiver at the sharpness of the sword on which her life seems to turn.

Pauline Lord is one who knows authentically that interior frisson that lies at the heart of drama. Such secret moments of illumination as she gives deepen the whole art of acting—make it in reality a noble art, with a long echo in the human spirit instead of a tricky performance where complacent or striking personality, or shrewd intelligence make their effects. This actress, too, has intelligence; but it is the sort that crystallizes unconsciously in the blood. She has personality; but it is as subtle and fugitive as an innocent remembered scent of childhood. She has, finally, a fascinating little face, mobile and sensitive; but only a modernist, drawing from memory again, rather than from observation, could evoke it by some fleeing line which would symbolize the moods—wilful, unreliable, excessive, tortured, vindictive, persecuted, pathetic, terrible—at the back of the dramatic temper. Out of the moods, rather than out of any fixed corporeal shape or beauty of her own, emerges, in its wholeness, the character and presence she is representing.

Off the stage Pauline Lord can look—yes, even now, at the height of her powers—an ingenue. The hands and feet, which she uses so sparingly yet so evocatively on the stage, are small, the waist is tiny, the frame slight and yielding. Her brown eyes have a startled look in the pale oval of her face. Her straight little nose, her sensitive, curved red mouth, her mop of tawny hair, done in an old-fashioned pompadour, would fit a Barrie heroine. Yet even in adolescence—she has been acting since she was thirteen—she was not chosen for ingenue parts. Her directors recognized in her gift something sterner. Nat Goodwin gave her at seventeen such mature parts as the rôle of a poor insane old woman in an asylum, mistreated by her keepers.

II

The Hotel Plaza is a conventional place to have tea with a prima donna. There I went, to find a slight, shy figure, dressed up in dark blue, hiding under a big hat, and with no airs of celebrity. Pauline Lord actually wanted to escape attention. Talking vaguely and politely, with fidgety little feminine gestures, she might have drifted in from some Middle Western town. She was not quite at ease or at home. Her dark eyes flickered. Her voice hesitated, trembled into huskiness. And then came a light nervous laugh—it came, it seemed to me, from some region that is not New York. Perhaps a forest glade.

That laugh gave me a vision of Pauline Lord herself. Of course she sat opposite to me, nibbling a cake. But also she was not there. Very much not there. I had a glimpse of her looking at me from behind a gilded pillar; appraising me; wondering: "Is this one of the people who will charge dentist's bills against me? Impersonate me? Sue me? Do me dirt?"

I tried to lure her back to her deserted seat by talk of the theatre. But my language was intellectual: she looked at me blankly, as if I spoke in riddles. "Praise to the face is an open disgrace," in New England. My word of admiration was awkward enough. But that was not why the actress retreated further. The only shrewdness I see in her is a seasoned doubt of the face value of words and persons—like Anna's first doubt of her father, like Amy's doubt of Tony's good intentions. But this delicately sceptical person would, I recognized, discount the Greeks and their gifts for another and finer reason: there is in her some inviolable severity, some deep humbleness and sincerity that is beyond compliment and even beyond praise. Though she were surrounded by panderers

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and flatterers they would not really touch her. She would only lend them the fume and froth of her more negligible personality.

"I never talk about the theatre—not crazy about it as a profession—so little help—nobody in my family really interested in the stage—never even keep my notices—

"I can't act—*really* act—unless I am unhappy or nervous—true happiness somewhere else—I have to say to myself, 'Pauline, you must earn your living'—sometimes I wonder why I can't be just normal—those people are much to be envied—a little commonplace happiness—"

The voice whispered like a ghost.

Another time—it was driving in the park on a hot summer night—she murmured: "I can't bob my hair." Nor was the remark inconsequent. Pauline Lord's whole silhouette is long-haired, persecuted, escaping. The best Paris dressmaker could not make of it the hard, chic, declaratory outline which every little stenographer picks up on Broadway. And I began to define this wistful woman who sat staring into the night, her head bent like a flower too heavy for its stalk, by a series of further negations. Nobody can "dress" her, set her off, not even that resourceful Robert Edmond Jones, who has done it often for the stage. She cannot capitalize her glamor, in the manner of the second-rate heroine, or—this comment she supplied herself—command attention by "carrying on" like a prima donna. She tried hysterics once. She thought she had reached the point where she could afford to—but they didn't work. And to tell the truth she can't see an actress banging her head on the floor without thinking—"do you suppose it is those years of hard work?"—that it is "funny."

"There are so many things to be sorry for in the world," went on the veiled voice. "I wanted to get some birds for my porch—songsters—I sent to a dealer—he said he had only one left—it wasn't worth selling—it wouldn't sing, it was ugly—well," breathed tenderness, "I wish you could hear that bird now, singing in my rose bushes—"

Once she nerved herself to talk a little of her method of working. This is an approximation: "Off the stage anybody can do anything to me—I don't know how to get what I want. I am uncertain.

"But on the stage I am different. I know exactly what I am about. I am sure. Oh, not at first. I have to study, to struggle, get to rock bottom—I think I am going to fail (I always think that—I need help.) But finally I see—every word, every action, every intonation, every movement, is clear to me—and I hear myself saying, right out, to people—oh, I give them their rights and their due, but I keep my own—I say: 'Don't you *dare* to stand there, do this, speak that way—'"

III

All converse with Pauline Lord must be impressionistic, fragmentary. It is as if you never in the everyday world saw her save in a half-light, never heard more than a half-word. Yet out of these vanishing vignettes, these indefinite phrases, and out of the comment of those who have worked with her on the stage, one gets a fairly clear sense of how she lives and functions as an artist.

First of all she is an intensely subjective actress. Her sources of power are inspirational, intuitive, almost mediumistic. The clue to her artistic destiny leads in a direction diametrically opposed to that of an actress of the Russian school. Take a Knipper-Tchekhova: her solid and redundant humanity seems based on a kind of group consciousness that reënforces her subjective contribution. The Moscow group, seen at a private party, give almost as unified a sense of background and tradition as a group of church-goers in an old style New England village. Not so a group of Broadway actresses. Put Pauline Lord with her emotional receptivity beside Clare Eames, with her nervous intelligence, Katherine Cornell, with her earthy fire, Eva Le Gallienne, with her self-enchanted egotism: one sees, not a group, but a series of brilliant individuals, shooting each at a personal tangent. The companions of Pauline Lord are not her sister actresses, but her twin selves, the defenseless mortal, avid of happiness, and the sure artist driven to a consummation that spurns happiness, held by a sort of duress in one skin.

If she belongs, as I believe she does, to a great dramatic lineage, it is by virtue of this doubleness of being, this peculiar temperamental endowment, which enables her by a kind of abnegation to invite into her wistful, human self a second self—an alien female, like Sidney Howard's Amy. She cherishes this non-self strongly and profoundly, as a mother a child. The girl fits inside her, takes the rhythm of her blood; and when she finally reveals her, in her nakedness, it is as flesh of her flesh. Whether you call Pauline Lord "great, great, great," in the words of Heywood Broun, or put her lower in the dramatic scale, you cannot ignore her temperament, which in kind is like that of a Duse or a Bernhardt. You may call the gift it fosters integrity of imagination, you may call it "inspiration," if you like. You may give it, as Bobby Jones and Hopkins do, a more mystical explanation.

"Why should an actress be a 'person'?" (Jones was staring with visionary detachment at the receding banks of the Hudson.) "Think of Duse, Bernhardt, Isadora. Characterization on the stage is a kind of divine incarnation. The 'character' is at once the guest and the adversary of the body it occupies. Consider the strain, the terror, for the tragic actress, of being at once the host and enemy

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to this divine phenomenon—the only one of our time. If she is open to sublimation, if she can reveal herself freely to an audience as a source of truth, as Pauline Lord does, she must be wrecked as a human being."

Arthur Hopkins, the director, who first among managers discerned Pauline Lord's true powers, speaks almost religiously of her access to the eternal verities. This chubby little brown man with his round brown eyes, that gaze inwards, his nubbly red apple cheeks, thinks of the theatre as of a church where the artist talks to God. Sitting in his office, he said of Pauline Lord—always gazing inwards—something like this:

"Artists cannot be dissected — Pauline Lord doesn't know where or how or when she gets what she does. But if there is such a thing as Absolute Truth, that is what she achieves.

"I believe we all have in us a register of all the emotions, Leonardo da Vinci was no different in essence from the rest of us. He only had more power to draw on his universal reservoir. Pauline Lord can reach it—her reading of a part has the absolute sureness of a hypnotized person, who has been commanded to do thus and so, say this or that. Everything she does or says has the beauty and exactitude of something that comes from a region of final truth. She is like Meller—the artist freed by a flight away from reality, into herself."

IV

The story of Pauline Lord's dramatic progress is the old theatre story of the struggle, courage, disappointment, fatigue of making a woman's way alone through years of grilling hardship to glorious success and exceptionally long runs. What distinguishes it from many others is its peculiarly baffled and unprotected quality. Pauline Lord was not sustained by the sense—which, after all, so often proves false—of a great artistic destiny. (Even now she does not think of herself as an "artist." She finds it disconcerting to hear these words used of herself.) She was not sustained, or projected toward achievement, as so many actresses have been, by the faith and consecrated exploitation of some second person—she traveled her path quite unaided, with the family whence she came gradually trailing in her wake, doing her utmost to be a good actress—doing it humbly and self-distrustfully, and often rebelliously or reluctantly, yet with no power to turn back from the path she had chosen. When a pretty, gentle, dependent, tender, fugitive girl with a strong pity for the under dogs of the earth shows this inflexible quality you can be pretty sure she is foredestined to go her own way. Pauline Lord was, it seems to me, a foredestined tragedienne. Life had to treat her ill. She had to be unhappy in love. The iron had to enter her soul. She had to learn to know the dark places of the earth, and stare into the cave—I borrow an image from Havelock Ellis—where the spirit of man is located.

She is a Californian—born in the San Joaquin valley, educated in a convent in Woodland. It was there, in the convent, in a school play, that she had her first success. Though she was only a Negro maid, she became the most important person. Yet she cannot tell you just why she went on the stage. There were no dramatic traditions in her family, except that her father ran away as a boy and went into vaudeville for a while. She only knows that when her people moved to San Francisco, she used her allowance of twenty-five cents a week to go every Saturday to a matinée, walking back and forth, a long distance, because there was nothing left for carfare. And at thirteen, she was studying and beginning to act in the school of the Alcazar Theatre, run by Belasco, the brother of the New York producer. John Craig saw her there, playing in a small part when she was fifteen, and said that she was like Mrs. Fiske. "That meant nothing in my life. I had never heard of Mrs. Fiske. I had never heard of anybody. If he had said that I was like the leading lady of the theatre, I should have known what he was talking about." Nat Goodwin also saw her, called out to her from the wings that phrase—often quoted in accounts of Pauline Lord—which lighted her ambition: "Burn a little oil, young lady!" He saw that she was gifted and casually told her to look him up when she came to New York.

There was nothing casual about the girl's response. Pauline took him literally. After the San Francisco earthquake, she gathered her savings together and came on. She was sixteen then. Nat Goodwin was more surprised than delighted when she walked in. He engaged her for a run on the road. But after all, she was neither fish nor fowl and he sent her home from New Orleans. Heartbreaking—somehow, she got back to New York again. But she had no luck and was glad enough to find an opening in a stock company in Milwaukee.

The next years were stern. It seemed that this girl was not made for good fortune. Her first New York appearance was under the management of Harris, in The Talker, by Marian Fairfax. The Talker was a hit. But then came seven or eight plays that were doomed as soon as they came on. She has no special patience in reciting the chronicle. What is the use—ancient history.

The important thing is this: she was, through all these years, struggling with dramatic technique. At first she strove—being superficially adaptable and indeed conventional—not a revolutionary in any sense—to live up to the instruction of her various directors and managers. "Stand here, move there. Say this, this way (like some popular actress probably). You're underplaying. What do you want playing melodrama as if it was Ibsen?" Somehow or other she could not please them or adopt their tricks. Somehow or other she was building up con-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

fidence in her inner convictions. But she took her directors like the rain.

"What shall I do?" she asked Arthur Hopkins, mechanically, when she began to rehearse The Deluge, her first play under his capable management.

"Do anything you want."

"Can I *really* do anything I want?" Shaken, she walked in, went over to the table—

This first moment of creative independence was her emancipation and her victory. Pauline Lord regards Arthur Hopkins with gratitude, as her only dramatic teacher. He says he taught her nothing. Nobody could teach her anything. He could only, he says, give her confidence in herself: confidence to make that contact with her inner guide.

From The Deluge she went on to On Trial, A Night's Lodging, Samson and Delilah, where she had her first long run as star. Anna Christie followed. The play ran for two years in New York, then in Chicago and on the road, then in London, in 1922, where the actress had the great triumph of her career. She was panicky beforehand. Bobby Jones relates how her tears flowed into her plate when he took her out to lunch. She was sure the traditional English coldness was going to drown her in a frigid tide. After the first performance the audience stood up and yelled. The play was called the greatest success of the London stage in twenty years. The actress conveyed the "thrill that comes only once or twice in a generation." Pauline Lord was recognized by the gallery that stood hours in the rain, by the critics so much more severe than our own, as an artist of the first order, who had gifts beyond the range of any contemporary English actress.

These gifts found their next important expression in They Knew What They Wanted. As with O'Neill, Pauline Lord was the instrument which discovered to the public the resonance of a new talent in the young American theatre. In the rôle of Amy, the California girl from the "spaghetti joint" who engages herself by correspondence to an Italian wine grower and discovers too late that he is old, she again had a character which she could render with an authentic realism that moved from pathos through aberration, and high-pitched dramatic tension to disciplined fortitude. The play had a great popular appeal; it ran more than a year in New York, and Pauline Lord terminated very recently her run in Chicago and on the road.

V

Where, on our stage, which loves stereotypes almost as much as our factories do—on our stage so rich, so wasteful of great talents, so accidental—will Pauline Lord end? Will she ever be allowed to develop, through use, the full range of her powers—which include those of a remarkable comedienne—as a continental artist of her calibre would surely do?

Even as I question comes doubt of the validity of the question. It is not for nothing that Pauline Lord reverences O'Neill's understanding of human suffering. Not for nothing that she loves to salvage tiny yellow canaries to hop briskly about her rose trees. Not for nothing that she flutters herself, so lightly, so sadly, about the cruel snares of life.

Ask her why she came to be sought to represent the erring, the unfortunate, the traduced of femininity, and you will get no very clear answer, beyond a sigh. But one thing is clear: as a feminine being, Pauline Lord is elusive, wistful, quivering, tormented. As a woman, she is defenseless—the doe pursued by the huntsman. She is harried; Io stung by the gadfly. It is only when she is before an audience that this torture becomes a fulfilment and an ecstasy. On the stage, the pursued quality of the woman takes on the aspect of Fate, Nemesis. The hunted quarry becomes the Tragic Victim.

ELIZABETH SHEPLEY SERGEANT.

(Editor's note: This is one of a series of articles in which Miss Sergeant is discussing interesting contemporary Americans.)

Fable

I led him on into the frosted wood.
Stamping our feet, beneath a larch we stood,
Breathing white edifices on the air;
And nothing else was moving there.

The branches hung as if they had not known
A day when any little wind had blown.
The snow above our heads wrought wondrously
A thousand gargoyles on a tree.

Freezing, we waited by the frozen brook. . . .
"Listen!" I said, and hardly dared to look.
A drift slid suddenly across the ice,
A frigid hawthorn trembled twice.

Then, slowly, through the brambles, marble-veined,
A hoof, a haunch, a heavy shoulder, strained.
A head swung down into a glassy heap
And smashed it with a sideward sweep.

I could not hold my tongue: "You see the horn!
That twisted golden bone . . . the Unicorn!"
I could not hold it back. And as I spoke
A splintered universe awoke.

The thing was gone. "You saw!" I spun around
To read his eyes. He kicked a knotted mound,
And all the gargoyles tumbled on his head.
"I'm numb, I'm going home," he said.

GEORGE O'NEIL.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Mexico's Educational Renaissance

MEXICANS interested in education are given to calling attention to the fact that President Calles began his career as a rural school teacher. In one of his earlier political announcements he summed up his program in two policies: economic liberation, and the development of public education. Most foreign residents are perforce familiar with the operations of the first factor in the program—which they usually call Bolshevism; not many have taken the trouble to acquaint themselves with the second.

At the outset, we may dispose of the formal features of the situation. The schools are of three categories: federal, state and municipal. The latter are decreasing, being taken over by the states, while federal activity is growing more rapidly than state; moreover, the figures regarding the latter are well kept and accessible, while statistics for state schools are often not organized, nor easily attainable. Elementary education covers six years, of which the first four are, legally, compulsory. Actually about four children out of ten of the school population are in public schools. There are no statistics for private schools, but, before the closing of the Catholic institutions it is a fair guess that about one-half of the children were in some school.

In the federal district, the government is spending four times as much as was spent in the heyday of the Diaz régime; in some of the larger towns, there are not as yet, owing to the destructions of the revolutionary period, as many state and municipal schools as in 1910. Five open-air schools have been started in Mexico City and suburbs during the present year, where 800 to 1,000 children are cared for at an expense for the plant of from ten to twenty thousand dollars. This type of school, the creation of the present school administration, under Doctor Puig, is artistic, hygienic and well adapted to the climate, and the low expense will make possible the provision of accommodation for all children of required school age in the federal district in a short time.

Until recently there was no secondary education in Mexico excepting the schools which prepared for the university; four high schools have been opened recently and are crowded. There is also a federal normal school, housed and equipped in a way equal to any in the world, with five thousand pupils of both sexes, including children in the practice school. A regional normal school for each state is planned. The flourishing National University has ten thousand students, a large number being women; its Rector, Doctor Pruneda, is much interested in exchange of students and teachers, and during a visit to the United States in the coming autumn will arrange for such exchanges with our own country, a consummation which is to be hoped for. As it is, the University maintains, under the direction of Doctor Montaño, a truly unique summer school for North Americans (one learns in a Spanish-American country to temper the arrogance of our ordinary "American"), attended during the past summer by more than three hundred persons, mainly teachers, from the United States.

The most interesting as well as the most important educational development is, however, the rural schools: which means, of course, those for native Indians. This is the cherished preoccupation of the present régime; it signifies a revolution rather than renaissance. It is not only a revolution for Mexico, but in some respects one of the most important social experiments undertaken anywhere in the world. For it marks a deliberate and systematic attempt to incorporate in the social body the Indians who form 80 percent of the total population. Previous to the revolution, this numerically preponderant element was not only neglected, but despised. Those who attack the revolution complacently ignore the fact that it was the inevitable outcome of this policy of contemptuous disregard for the mass of the people, a disregard which affected every phase of life: educational, for example, since the Diaz administration did not establish a single rural school for Indians. In spite of the difficulty in securing teachers, there are now 2,600 such schools, 1,000 of which were opened during the last year, which it is hoped to raise to 2,000 during the coming year. It is estimated that if ten years of tranquility are secured, there will be schools for the entire school population, and illiteracy, as far as the new generation is concerned, will be wiped out.

This educational revolution not only represents an effort to incorporate the indigenous population into the social life and intellectual culture of Mexico as a whole, but it is also an indispensable means of political integration for the country. Nothing in Mexico can be understood without bearing in mind that until a few years ago the Indians were economically enslaved, intellectually disinherited and politically eliminated. Even the present church-state crisis roots, at many points, in this fact. Because of the absence of rural schools, the only common force which touched the life of all the people was the church; and it is putting it moderately to say that the influence of the clergy did not make for social and political integration. The fact that the country priests have used their enormous influence over the souls of their parishes to oppose the establishment of rural schools has been at least one factor causing the drastic decree for the laicizing of all primary schools.

The difficulties in creating a moral and political

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

entity out of Mexico are so enormous that they often seem insuperable; one most readily pictures the general state of the country by thinking of early colonial days in the United States, with a comparatively small number of settlements of a high civilization surrounded by Indian peoples with whom they have but superficial contact. The fact that the Mexican Indians have a settled agricultural life, a much higher culture and greater resistance than our own Indians but increases the difficulty of the situation. Add to this fact that the Indians are anything but homogeneous among themselves, divided into some thirty different tribes, intensely self-centred, jealous of their autonomy, prizing an isolation which is accentuated by geographical conditions, and we begin to have a faint idea of the problem which the revolutionary government is facing as systematically as all previous régimes dodged it. It is evidence of the still superficial character of our democratic ideas that the average foreign resident in Mexico, including those from the United States, assumes that the problem is incapable of solution, and that the only way out is "strong" oligarchical rule. One might think that the gallant attempt of the revolutionary government would win recognition if but for its gallantry, even from those who think the cause is doomed, but the sporting instinct of the average Anglo-Saxon (happily there are exceptions) appears to be as specialized as is his democratic creed.

Much more interesting than statistics are the spirit and aims which animate these rural schools. Mr. Saenz, the first sub-secretary of education (who once taught in the Lincoln School in New York), stated in a lecture recently at the University of Chicago that "nowhere have I seen better examples of a socialized school than in some of these rural schools in Mexico." I am willing to go further and say that there is no educational movement in the world which exhibits more of the spirit of intimate union of school activities with those of the community than is found in this Mexican development. I have long had a pet idea that "backward" countries have a great chance educationally; that when they once start in the school-road they are less hampered by tradition and institutionalism than are countries where schools are held by customs which have hardened through the years. But I have to confess that I have never found much evidence in support of this belief that new countries, educationally new, can start afresh, with the most enlightened theories and practices of the most educationally advanced countries. The spirit and aims of Indian rural schools as well as of the Normal School of Mexico revived my faith.

Much of the actual work is, it goes without saying, crude, as crude as are the conditions under which it is done. But it is the crudeness of vitality, of growth, not of smug conventions. Whether or not it is the uprooting effect of long continued revolutions I do not know; but along with the bad effects of so many and so rapid social dislocations, there is evident everywhere a marked spirit of experimentation, a willingness "to try anything once," and most things more than once. Given the good start which now exists, the great need is continuity of policy, and it is seriously to be hoped that changes of political administration will not lead to abrupt shifts of educational plan.

Neither as to buildings, course of study nor preparation of teachers has the mistake of over-elaborateness been made. Of the thousand federal rural schools opened during the last year almost every one was furnished without cost to the nation by the people of the locality, mainly by the parents who wanted their children to have the opportunities at present denied them. To judge from those which I saw in the state of Tlaxcala, they are mainly old buildings, sometimes churches, sometimes houses, which had been ruined and were restored for school use. In an Indian village not far from Mexico City, the six grades were housed in six different adobe dwelling-houses offered by the parents in lieu of any available building. Every school has a garden attached, and it is characteristic of the æsthetic temperament of the Indian that although the vegetable section may be neglected, the flower garden is sure to be gay and well cared for.

The simplicity of the buildings and the genial climate make for a simple curriculum: reading, writing and, when necessary, the speaking of Spanish as a matter of course; some "figuring," local geography, national history with emphasis upon the heroes of Independence and the Revolution, and then for the remainder, industrial education, chiefly agricultural, and such home industries, weaving, pottery, etc., as are characteristic of the neighborhood. (It is part of the general "socialistic" policy of the present government to foster the development of "small industries," carried on in the home, and coöperatively managed, as an offset to the invasion of large, capitalistic and therefore for the most part foreign industries. (In many places there is much attention to music and to design in the plastic arts, for both of which things the Indians display a marked genius. As a rule, if what we saw may be depended upon as evidence, the designs in the small rural schools were much better, even though the work was crude, than in the industrial schools of the city, where department store art has made a lamentable invasion. If the rural schools can succeed in preserving the native arts, æsthetic traditions and patterns, protecting them from the influence of machine-made industry, they will in that respect alone render a great service to civilization. Fortunately the influence of Vasconcelos, the former minister of education, and of Doctor Gamio, the distinguished anthropologist, was strongly employed for the maintenance of the indigenous arts and crafts. At the present time the National University has a woman, herself a culti-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

vated musician, constantly occupied in traveling throughout the country collecting the folk-songs, words and music, in which Mexico is rich almost without parallel in contemporary countries.

As for instruction, the leading idea is that any teacher is better than none, provided there is a native man or woman who can read and write and is devoted. For the most part, they receive their professional instruction after they begin teaching. One of the most interesting features of teacher training is the "cultural missions." The "missionaries" (this is their title) go to some country town, gather the rural teachers of the immediate district, and for three weeks the staff gives intensive instruction. The work is not theoretical pedagogy. There is always an instructor in physical training (almost every school in Mexico, no matter how remote, now has a playground and a basketball field). A social worker is present, usually a woman, who gives instruction in hygiene, first aid, vaccination, and the rudiments of the care of children, etc. There are also a teacher of chorus singing, a specialist in hand industries, instructed to employ as far as possible local materials, and finally, a specialist in school organization and methods of teaching. The task of the latter is, however, chiefly to coördinate the academic teaching of the schools with agricultural and manual industries.

During the last school year, the missionaries worked in six states and next year's budget carries an increase of half a million pesos for extension of the work. At the same time, the federal bureau is sending small libraries as fast as possible to all schools, and the aim is to make each one the centre of a new life for its neighborhood, intellectual, recreational and economic. Night schools are held in each building, to which come young men and women who are to work during the day; their eagerness to learn is symbolized in the fact that they walk miles to reach the place of instruction, each one bringing a candle by whose glimmering light the studying is done. And the Indian teachers work practically all day and then again in the evening for a wage of four pesos a day.

The ruling educational catch-word is escuela de acción. It is a common complaint that the graduates of the former schools have marvelous memories, but no initiative and little independent responsibility. This fact has been cited to me scores of times as a convincing indication of the limits of the mentality of the Mexican. I am sceptical in advance of all such psychological generalizations; as long as pupils were dealing with traditional studies in the traditional way, the material was so isolated from their experience that memory was their sole reliance. Now that "activity"—not always to be sure with adequate organization or intellectual content—is the guiding principle, and the "project method" is all but officially adopted as the basis of the school program, there is sure to be a change. Practice falls short of ideals, and the program is much better executed in some places than in others. But I believe that the brightest spot in the Mexico of today is its educational activity. There is vitality, energy, sacrificial devotion, the desire to put into operation what is best approved in contemporary theory, and above all, the will to use whatever is at hand.

We in the United States who have pursued such a different policy with our Indian population are under an obligation to understand and to sympathize. The policy of incorporating the Indians into modern life is of such extraordinary difficulty, its execution demands so much time, peace and tranquility, that any action on our part which puts added obstacles in its way is simply criminal. One can sympathize with foreigners in Mexico who find that their legal rights are not assured; yet from the standpoint of business in the long run as well as from that of human development, vested legalities are secondary to the creation of an integrated people. Foreign interference in any and every form means immediate increased instability and this unsettlement means in turn the prolongation of those internal divisions which have been the curse of Mexico; it means a deliberate cultivation of all seeds of turbulence, confusion and chaos.

JOHN DEWEY.

Teacher's Pet

THE morning is crisp with impending winter, and pungent with the last fragrance of fallen leaves. The children have all trooped, more or less willingly, into school, where they sit in neat rows spread out before the teacher's desk—some in attitudes of laborious effort, some frankly indolent or brewing mischief, some bent with absorption, some intent upon communicating an important comment or request to one of their fellows. George is slouched before his history book, with the Spartan intention to get the plaguy lesson and be done with it. Campaigns and dates swim vaguely across the page, but never really engross his mind, which keeps reverting to that half complete model of a gasoline pump out in the woodshed at home. Across the aisle Ethel, neatly bright and shining, scans her pages with a practiced eye—a name here, a date there, a line of movement connecting the links: in no time the task is done. Yet not too soon. Teacher is rising and calling this half of the room to order for the history recitation. Books are shut, and one by one the items from the page are delivered from memory to the teacher.

"Now, George, who was the general in charge of the Northern forces at Bull Run?"

George cudgels his errant brain for the required item; but in vain. Across the aisle Ethel's hand waves eagerly, irritatingly, confusingly. This is such a jolly game, the hand is saying, such an easy, exciting game. Get out of the way, George, and let the game go on!

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

George gets out of the way with a sullen "I dunno."

"Well, Ethel," says Teacher to the hand, "you may tell George."

Now beware, gentle reader; do not shed your pity upon George—nor your scorn. Conserve them both; you will need them—for Ethel, the Star Pupil. Just what do I mean by a "star pupil"? I refer to that delight of the teacher, the industrious, amenable, eager little individual who always seems to say the right thing at the right time whatever the subject or class—never irritatingly argumentative or uninterested, never dully bewildered or unresponsive. One may ask what are the motivations of so much (class room) goodness. An aggravated desire to please; a natural responsiveness; a lack of inhibitingly strong native drives in one or more directions. Also ambition—derived from family, from some chance remark, from inability to excel outside the school room, from suppressed sex activity—any or all of these and others, for ambition is probably a compound of an unknown number of more or less mysterious and incalculable elements. But whatever the motivations, the fact remains that this young person basks in the glow of small success, and the sweet radiance of teacher's praise. And so I say, reserve for her your pity—or your scorn.

I know whereof I speak, for I have been Ethel; and I feel sure that I have paid altogether too dearly for those daily flights into triumph, paid in the waste of the precious ten or more years devoted to the collection of flattering grades in the annual class rooms—when I might have been establishing organic contacts with life, might have been taught by the hewing out of native tastes and their unforgettable knowledges to trust and criticize and develop my own personality. Rather staggering quantities of more or less interesting and useful facts I did take on. And what has become of them? They are left behind, along with the occasions for their recitation. A merciful dispensation, for the most part, except that, unfortunately, the relevant have been sloughed off with the irrelevant, so that now, in busy years after the "end of my education" I must find time to *begin* my education by learning for real results the things I really need and crave. Theoretically I should be able to lug forth into the light of day my amassed stores of information and cull from the outpoured heaps whatever I need today. But this is a pleasant fairy tale. My mind is no such dusty attic. It is a busy workshop now, at last, and what I did not *absorb* and make part of my inner mental life at the time of learning is not on the premises now. To be sure, I know where to go to look it up—but should I have had to spend ten years to learn that? Set down then ten years largely wasted—over the will-o'-the-wisp of "standing." It is an exorbitant extravagance!

It is, happily, true that one of the sadder concomitants of my status I by some miracle escaped. I was, curiously enough, not disliked by my contemporaries: curiously, for with every breath I drew in the school room my lungs were nourished by that sense of fluent power, of easy leadership. Not the acquired knowledge, but the thrill of achievement, made the school hours the brightest of the week.

And in just what did this achievement consist? Rapid reading, ready memory, quick wits, to be sure. But more than this is implied in the title "teacher's pet," whether opprobrious or merely descriptive. It seems to me now, looking backward over, well, quite a number of years, that two elements chiefly are involved: suggestibility and prestige. A tricky pair these—they so easily alter their complexion from guardian angels to twin devils, as the model child becomes the plaster adult. For the suggestible child finds himself—willy nilly—growing to fit the pattern desired by those about him, and as that pattern becomes visible in him the resultant credit is automatically forthcoming from a flattered adult world.

To some extent the term "teacher's pet" is accurate; there comes to be a real personal relation between the teacher and the successful pupil. Nor do I refer merely to the friendly warmth produced by the natural gratification of each at securing the desired response from the other: ready understanding and answer from the pupil by the teacher; ready approval and continued opportunities from the teacher for the pupil. The interaction I have in mind takes place much more subtly in the making of a class room prodigy. It is akin to mind reading, and to those rapid processes which cause the listener to complete the speaker's thought for him before he can express it. It may be the teacher's fault—as when he implies the answer more or less openly in the question. And how few questions do not at least point the desired tone of the answer! Or the answer may be implied by the trend of questioning—by the sequence with which question has followed question. And over and above these obvious "leads" are a thousand and one little tricks of intercommunication of thought—facial, nervous, verbal, or of the eyes. How easy for the suggestible child, having skimmed the material involved, to "read" the teacher's mind and produce, like the confident conjuror, a proper rabbit from the apparently empty hat. And what a capital game it is! Try it for a rainy afternoon, do! But do not allow it to seduce you—lest in the end you are sentenced to spend all your days drawing rabbits from silk hats.

For here is the proof that the happy Ethel, and not the downcast George, is the fit subject for your pity. George may, indeed, suffer from continued blows to his self-confidence. He may become disgusted both with knowledge and with himself. To do this to him is senseless and condemnable damage. But he has his compensations. Being thus early disillusioned, more or less, of the joys of either knowledge or scholastic position he concentrates his attention more and more upon such interests and

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

activities as are truly integral to his unique personality. He may write poetry, or he may play truant to fish or shoot craps; he may read furiously along some one or more beloved lines to the ruination of his general "standing," or he may develop mechanical, financial or artistic interests. This much is sure. Whatever of these he develops comes from an inner urge and therefore supplies its own motive power and is sure under any but the most crushing conditions and often even then, to grow into something useful to his mature personality, inseparable from it, and a dependable means of contact for it with the realities of living. That is to say, George has started to become a man, and stands likely to become a genuine, possibly an original, person.

But consider Ethel. All her energies are absorbed in achieving success, which she is doing largely by an (unconscious) operation of "tuning in" on her teacher's mental habits and class room methods. When that teacher has passed out of her experience, what is left?—a few scattering facts fluttering in the breeze, and at least two habits: the habit of living upon prestige; and the habit of molding herself to the necessary personality, absorbing its methods of thought and probably its Weltanschauung as a plant absorbs the sunshine through its leaves. *But* the methods of thought, or the Weltanschauung are not hers; they are borrowed and may fall to pieces or be lost at any time. What are hers, the true products of her inner consciousness, are the habits of adaptation by which she has sucked up and taken on unquestioningly these various items. Now what sort of equipment is this for her adult life? That depends. It will probably make her a success as a personal subordinate, such as a confidential secretary, or perhaps the devoted wife—to George. If this is the true range of her ambition, if her talent is really for merging herself in the enterprise of another and carrying on the designs of others, well and good. Probably the only harm that has been done is to build her ambitions, her experiences of success, over-high, with the likelihood of hard later disappointments, more or less embittering.

But if there were, in her too, ranges of originality, of creativeness, then indeed her angels have become devils, and she will find herself forced to do mortal combat for her soul. For the aim or the habit of prestige is not, and can never become the foundation of creative originality. And, what is still worse, a high degree of suggestibility tends constantly to break down those necessary barriers of resistance and un-response behind which the emerging personality may have the good offices of silence and long time and patient lonely effort.

I do not say that the Star Pupil learns nothing, is genuinely interested in nothing. Rather is it the case that she temporarily learns everything (factual); and is interested in everything, temporarily. But what residuum remains in the mind in ten, twenty, thirty years? The mind has served the purpose of a delivery truck—industriously taking on its load, day after day, speeding with it to the appointed spot, and returning empty for further loads. How can any new thing be created, be dreamed, in such a business? It is a business of transportation, of hourly schedules of delivery; it is not a business of production where seeds sprout in their own time in the warm earth.

And is it not curious, gentle reader, that we prize suggestibility so highly, and rate its products so generously in the world of children, and then turn with the innocent complaint of mistreatment at the hands of the universe when we find that the leaders of our society are either "too one-sided" or "very superficial"? Having carefully "raised up" George and Ethel, we are astonished to find that they exist!

Increasingly now in the adult world we are hearing expressions of wonderment as to how a generation of the usual years and intelligence came to place its faith so completely and naïvely in salvation by the enactment of rules. But why this amazement? The school rooms which have prepared us for adult years have been a network of rules and schedules. And did they not work? Were not the good exalted, and the bad disgraced? Was not a suitable autocracy of talent and brains set up, and was it not comfortably established that rules could and did mold individuals and govern a group?

We were taught that the purpose of school practice was that we should carry it over into our mature years and be, thereby, both wise and good. Well, lack-a-day, we did our best. Most of what we learned could not be carried over. The happier among us have intuitively unburdened our memories of their loads even before the death of many of the "facts" at the hands of modern science or invention or history had rendered their burial imperative. To be sure, a musty smell rises from various sunny corners of the land, where admirers of various items, more zealous than discerning, are refusing to make interment. We did our best, I say, to carry over the precepts and experiences of childhood. And among the things we have found it possible to keep with us through fluid years is a belief in rules, their goodness and their power—questioned no more by George, even in his struggles with them, than by Ethel, riding the crest of their wave. The universe was like that! You had to have rules, even though many found it all but impossible to conform. Without rules all would be chaos; with them order and efficiency were assured—in the school room and therefore in life. Without rules of study everyone would wish to remain ignorant; without examinations everyone would succeed in doing so. Without rules of conduct everyone would revert to original sin; and without a teacher knowledge or wisdom could never be unlocked.

Unfortunately children are naturally humble. Even the most blatant and boastful do not really trust themselves—it is all a pantomime. And so I believed these axioms; you believed them. They are some of the things we have never forgotten,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

find it almost impossible to forget. Why is it strange that we handle our world from that point of view; that we, in our turn, attempt to educate on a wholesale scale by enactment plus a budget; that we applaud our fellows strictly in accordance with their official rating and prestige; that we amend the Constitution when we wish to make over our conduct; and that we believe an unbelievably large proportion of what we read or are told? (Do not hesitate to retort, gentle reader, that you certainly do not believe all that you are reading at this moment.)

We have also learned well our lesson in suggestibility. Even those of us who did not succeed in reading the teacher's mind have since become adept at telling "which way the wind blows," and keeping on the right side of the fence. We daily take on from our fellows, unconsciously, our tastes in books, houses, food, places to go, people to avoid, convictions on morals and lack of convictions on religion. We were, of course, bound to do this anyway; but we have been developing no resistance to it, no criticism of it. For that way lies "success." This much Ethel, not being a moron, has deduced. And if George does not follow the conviction it will be because his sturdy early intractability and inability to follow the path of least resistance has held over in spite of the odds. In this case he may turn out to be a "failure"—glorious, or quite otherwise—or he may turn out to be a leader or a genius. At any rate he will not be a simple unit of the crowd, interchangeable with any other unit.

It is this fate of living annihilation that threatens the Star Pupil. There are hairbreadth escapes. But there are also many casualties. These are called "efficient," "commendable," "dutiful," "good," even "successful." But no one would call them "original," or ever shock them by saying they were "odd." They continue to star in mediocrity all their days.

I know well the pitfalls—the easy conquests, the vapid acceptances of "truth," the mild thrill of sliding along for months on nothing but prestige acquired by previous performance. For I was an assiduous and model Star Pupil all through the grammar and high school years. That college should have brought gradual release, and a degree of awakening to the vivid, painful, tantalizing realities of the world of affairs and of the world of books, is to this day a source of amazement as well as profound thankfulness. And, who knows, I may still be flattering myself when I assume that at last I have escaped.

No, gentle reader, shake your heads over George, if you must, and give him a helping hand toward confidence and achievement of his own, if you can; but save your pity for Ethel, at her hazardous post of success, and leave no doors unopened for her escape.

What we really should do, of course, is to abolish the Star Pupil—by enactment.

ADELAIDE MOREY KELLOGG.

Women on the Housetops

THE general effect is small and dry and pat. She has told me her name, which is formal like a corporation, or so at least when she mentions it; and I can see that she has been president at one time or another of many clubs. All these five days since we arrived in Cordoba, she from Algeciras and Africa, I from Seville and Spain, I have spoken with her no more than was unavoidable as we sat in the patio of the hotel for coffee after lunch and dinner every day. It was evident that you would never in any event talk with her, but only sit there making antiphonal responses, reduced to a mere congregation at her feet.

This lady is a walking Club or National Committee. She is a mother and has several children, she tells me; but plainly they are well disposed in suitable schools, and she is free to think, labor, serve and at fit seasons travel the world and widen her point of view. As species she may be regarded as pure point of view. As individual she may be regarded as an address or report. From these firm sources her conversation and her mode of thought proceed. Her wits may be a little trite but they are organized. Always in her brain there is a gavel rapping for order.

Now today, however, this fine Sunday with the Spanish sun shining outside whiter than the light on snow and people withdrawn indoors for coffee or siesta or sitting humming together in a little shaded group, according to their station, this lady sits under a high palm in the patio of the Francia. Her subject concerns Tunis, from which she has just returned, and indeed the Orient; and, stated more particularly, the position of women—her voice turns it to capital letters as she speaks.

She had gone about Tunis all day, she says, noting the people and their ways of living. It was a striking place, with all those white houses everywhere and those fine, straight men walking about, riding horses and sitting in conference together. The souks, or bazaars, were striking, quite as the guide books said, with their long lines of shops running on and on, filled with brightly colored merchandise, the walls white, the unusually strong sunlight let in from openings above. It is always interesting and educative to see how people live in various countries. But as the day wore on she was obliged to notice more and more the absence of women everywhere. It could not be overlooked, even though not unexpected, for one knew of course that in Eastern countries women were kept shut up at home, and submitted still to the rulings of men in such matters.

But for all that, notwithstanding, she was not prepared for what she saw later. When she returned to her hotel that night and went out on the balcony of her sitting-room she saw all the housetops filled with women. The low Arab houses spread in every direction and glowed richly in the warm afterglow, for the sun had dropped below the walls of the town. On the flat roofs, arranged doubtless for this sort of thing, were the women, some sitting, some walking about, some talking with the women of the next house. Women locked up, women the very slaves of men!

The lady began then a long discourse on this subordination of women in the Orient, their seclusion; they had no rights, she had even heard that in the religion of the Arabs women had no souls, but was told that that was inexact,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

they had souls of a kind doubtless. Mark the difference, she went on, mark the difference between this state of things and that holding in America, where the woman was queen; American women were queens; there woman was honored of all men; never before in the history of the world—and so on and so on. At the Never Before she became quite splendid.

The heat, doubtless, and the guitar strumming in the arcade nearby, together with her sonority and organization, made me more reckless than I might have been. I listened at length, pinned into this alcove of the palm, while the station of the American woman throned above the worshiping men grew richer and righter; and then at last when the periods rounded to their due peroration, I was asked to agree, was the speaker not correct?

It was then that I said that I was not so sure.

"Not so sure? Surely——"

I repeated that I was not so sure. At Tunis toward sundown, I went on, the women were on the housetops. Very well, and where were they in our New York? At the clubs and tea rooms. In neither place, neither the Eastern nor the Western, did the men want the women around; the men went about their business and left the women to shift for themselves. In both places they might need the women later on in the day, for more, shall we say, elemental relations, dinner, sex, children and household management. But later on. So where's the difference, New York and Tunis?

A platform seemed to grow beneath the lady's body, like a holy, magic Indian lifting himself into the air of Bombay or Benares. But I went on, giving her no chance to interrupt. It was a naughty pleasure for once to hold a meeting in her face, so to speak.

Could it be really said, I asked, putting up a bit of rival tonality in my speech, could it really be said that American men liked women? They spoiled them, yes, gave them what they wanted, let them come off to Paris for six months, bought them automobiles and built them houses full of modern utility ideas. But might not that be a way of disposing of them? The man then was free to go about his affairs and work himself to death, if he liked, in the adventure of business and the promotion of his enterprises. But does the American man, the Anglo-Saxon for that matter, like women? Does he care to spend hours with them, as men do on the Continent, not only for physical reasons, not for that any more than for the mere enjoyment of the feminine complement, and merely for the enjoyment of their diverse music—drawing from woman the music that might complement the man music and complete the sum of our human nature; delighting meanwhile in their perfection in feminine kind; struggling with them too for the adventurous booty and the deep, vivacious spoils that belong to the battle between the sexes? Do American men choose all this? Do American women wish them to, these men so single-minded and so simplified from a busy objective life? At any rate why the host of bored and restless women?

Is some of the American talk about the exalted position of women a relic of the Roman matron idea, the echo, via high schools and capitols, of an old moral oratory? By the Love of Women might we not mean the love men give sometimes to their mothers? For the Frenchman who will not marry against his mother's wishes, the obedient relation must be strong indeed. What if we say that where the Frenchman loves his lady, wife or mistress, and obeys his mother, the American obeys his wife and loves his mother? Or was this an exaggeration?

Before my audience could reply I admitted that it was an exaggeration put in for the joy of nations. But I went on to say that the Arabs at least married lots of ladies and did not leave them standing about the walls of spinsterhood. I asked if it might not be possible that the movement in New York toward roof gardens and housetops might be a piece of Easternism?

This remark is so utterly frivolous that the lady softens, she conceives that I am trying to divert her, to relieve her graver hours. She smiles where up to this time she had sat there looking at me as if to say, Are you an American? you talk like a pro-German.

For this leniency I reward her by giving her another cause—the cruel treatment of birds in Italy, snaring them in nets, and so on; I suggest an undertaking that might alleviate this situation. Her round, firm eyes look interested and grateful with new distress. Nor am I sure that she is not a little shaken about the American idols, and is not wondering if a re-evaluation of American male love might not be an even better subject than the queen theme.

STARK YOUNG.

Little Boy Blue

He rubbed his eyes and wound the silver horn.
Then the continuum was cracked and torn
With tumbling imps of music being born.

The blowzy sheep lethargic on the ground
Suddenly burned where no fire could be found
And straight up stood their fleeces every pound.

The grim bellwether rose and rang his bell,
The seven-days' lambs went skipping and skipped well,
And Baa Baa Baa, the flock careered pell-mell.

The yellow cows that milked the savory cud,
Propped on the green grass or the yellow mud,
Felt such a tingle in their lady blood

They ran and tossed their hooves and horns of blue
And jumped the fence and gamboled kangaroo
Divinely singing as they wandered, Moo.

A plague on such a shepherd of the sheep,
That careless boy with pretty cows to keep!
With such a burden I could never sleep.

After his notes had run around the sky
And then proceeded to grow faint and die,
He stuffed his horn with straw and laid it by;

And when the legs were tired beneath the sheep
And there were spent and sleepy cows to keep,
He rubbed his eyes again and went to sleep.

JOHN CROWE RANSOM.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CORRESPONDENCE

Who Wants a Playground?

SIR: The Harmon Foundation would appreciate your coöperation in bringing the vital problem of playgrounds for children to the attention of your readers. The Foundation is this year offering $50,000 to encourage the growing communities in the United States to set aside land for play purposes. The offer consists of payments which will in no instance amount to more than 50 percent of the cost of the land or more than $1,000 for a specified playground. Not less than two acres of land will be considered, the Harmon appropriation to make the last contribution to the purchase of the land. We are interested in getting in touch with towns which have a permanent population of 2,500 or more. We have had excellent coöperation from civic organizations, school officials and public-minded citizens in many centres throughout the country. Prior to the present offer more than seventy playgrounds have been established under these auspices. This not only helps to combat accident mortality among children but to improve their health by wholesome outdoor exercise.

Communications may be addressed to the writer at 140 Nassau St., New York, N. Y.

MARY BEATTIE BRADY.
Director, the Harmon Foundation.

New York, N. Y.

Graft in War Contracts

SIR: The report of James Cameron, retiring Director of Investigations and Accounts for the War Department, is being widely accepted as giving a death blow to the generally circulated stories of wholesale graft in connection with the government's war contracts. Any such conclusion, whether based on Mr. Cameron's report or not, is in absolute contradiction to the facts. I have personal knowledge of some of the war activities of the Wilson administration—the Shipping Board's—concerning which the records of Congress contain proof of the grossest and most colossal corruption in history, as a result of which over five billion dollars—including interest on the Shipping Board appropriations—was stolen, deliberately squandered and intentionally wasted. My detailed charges regarding this—before Congressional Committees, and in the press, and in an address delivered in Washington, D. C., which was listened to by some of the men who were making way with these billions and their lawyer-lobbyists—have never been challenged.

The men guilty or responsible for this looting and betrayal of the public interest were, with few exceptions, not of President Wilson's party, but, in the emergency created by the War, were called by him to the service of the government. They then killed two birds with one stone—they made a ghastly failure of the government's merchant marine, the legislation for which they had by every device attempted to defeat or block, and they made way with and dissipated the taxpayer's billions.

The alibi is sometimes offered that the government sometimes made bad bargains because of the inexperience of its agents or because of the need of speedy action during the rush of the War. But this won't hold for the Shipping Board. The men who administered that organization were our most prominent and experienced shipping men, and over 80 percent of the money spent by the Shipping Board was spent after the War had passed into history. A few of the ships were later given to inexperienced and unfit agents who employed certain lawyers whose fees in the matter certainly did not cover legitimate legal services.

The people have fallen between two stools—the Democratic party is responsible for the Shipping Board's doings under the Wilson administration and would whitewash it, and the men who profited most are Republicans of national prominence. That is why we have had so many whitewashes of the Shipping Board, the most conspicuous of which was that of the Committee under the Chairmanship of Representative (Jos.) Walsh, of Massachusetts, which, after the investigators of that Committee—Fisher and Richardson—had uncovered the worst corruption in modern times and made it the subject of a report which shocked the nation and which every newspaper in the land spread across its front page, waited until enough time had been allowed for the people to forget, and then ended with a whitewash when the investigation began to touch men of great wealth and of prominence in the Republican party, as well as reflect upon the efficiency of the Wilson administration.

And now, the last act in this tragedy is about to take place by the disposal of the remaining worthwhile ships—all that the Shipping Board has to show for the expenditure of more than five billion dollars of the people's money—for a few million dollars, which will quickly go the way that the rest of the people's money went.

PHILIP MANSON.

New York, N. Y.

Nature Prefers Non-Nordics?

SIR: Nordic patriots might well take note of the immortals chosen out of the field of literature by fifteen representative writers and publicists from all parts of the world, as reported in the New York Times for July 25.

Out of the total number, twelve, only four—Shakespeare, Milton, Dickens and Goethe—come from so-called "Nordic" peoples (granting that we know what that means). Furthermore out of a total of sixty-eight names submitted by the jury only twenty-one might be called Nordics.

What makes it even more painful to the protagonists of this "tall, fair-haired race," is that the jury consisting of fifteen men contained eleven "Nordics" and only four Mediterraneans. Is further evidence necessary that our "superior Nordics" are being seduced by those "miserable and crafty Mediterraneans" and that the "passing of the great race" is imminent unless the quack doctor's advice is followed?

K. S. PINSON.

New York, N. Y.

A School For Peace Workers

SIR: The movement for universal peace has received an impetus in the success of the recent Summer School for Peace Workers, which took place at the small town of Gland, Vaud, Switzerland, on Lake Geneva. The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom sponsored the school, which was attended by all types of students, representing many interesting groups. Thus, from France came young followers of Romain Rolland, while from Czechoslovakia Madame Illova, chairman of the Czech section, brought six students of politics not identified with any pacifistic organization. The mingling of Americans, English, Syrians, Germans, French, Belgians, Czechs, Balkans, Japanese, Chinese, Hindus and others, not only in the conference room but more intimately in the informal hours of recreation, gave to each a better sense of proportion, a clearer and more balanced approach to the problem of international relationships.

The dramatic feature of the session was the reception accorded Jane Addams. Distinguished men and women, all international figures, united in acknowledgement of the great qualities of mind and heart of the International Chairman of the Women's International League. To her was attributed the original voicing of some of the greatest ideas developed by the League of Nations. To the League for Peace and Freedom a glowing tribute was paid by Gilbert Murray. All in all, the eagerness shown by so many persons to understand the international situation and to lend their efforts to the solution of its problems is a most encouraging sign of the times.

C. S. W.

Mt. Airy, Philadelphia, Pa.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Wyndham Lewis's Ulysses

The Art of Being Ruled, by Wyndham Lewis. New York: Harper and Brothers. 450 pages. $4.

THE war between intellect and feeling, between mind and heart, is one of the constant phenomena of human history. The more complete the victory of either principle in one period, the more violent the reaction in the next. The early eighteenth century was conspicuously an age of reason; it was followed by a period of extreme emotionalism; and the two forces led respectively by Voltaire and Rousseau joined together to make the Revolution. The nineteenth century is a slow recession of romanticism, a return to reason stimulated by the scientific interest. The present will be counted as a continuation of a reversion to feeling which began in the nineties, and, in spite of certain efforts to stem the tide, is still running strongly. Among these efforts two stand out as books of a moment to remind us that the intellect is not always entirely justified of its children. In the early nineties Dr. Max Nordau launched his famous protest against the dominant tendencies of the time which he summed up in his title, Degeneration. Now thirty years later Mr. Wyndham Lewis comes forward with The Art of Being Ruled which strongly resembles its predecessor in point of view.

For The Art of Being Ruled is more than a treatise in political science; it is a treatise on tendencies in the modern world. Mr. Lewis jibes at James Joyce's Ulysses, which presents the mind of Leopold Bloom as so full of a number of things, but The Art of Being Ruled presents his own mind as similar to Poldy Bloom's in its capacity and the miscellaneous character of its contents, although the principle of selection is somewhat different. Mr. Lewis opens to us the mind of a modern man. All his reading and a good share of his thoughts, it would seem, are displayed, and the variety is exhilarating. The basis of the book is the political complexion of mankind, but besides this we find excursions in literary criticism, history, sociology, philosophy, education, manners, and various sciences including a long dissertation upon homosexuality among the sub-Arctic peoples, as well as among the Greeks and Romans. Further, Mr. Lewis expounds and usually explodes the doctrines of Nietzsche, Bergson, Marx, Fourier, Proudhon, Péguy, the Vaertings, Sorel, Chesterton, Bertrand Russell and Bernard Shaw, and passes sentence on Marcel Proust, James Joyce and Trudy Stein. His method differs from that of Doctor Nordau. The Art of Being Ruled is in the form of one of Bernard Shaw's prefaces, enormously extended, a likeness to which the headlines add emphasis. Further, Mr. Lewis has caught the epigrammatic colloquialism which gives vivacity to Mr. Shaw's style, without the sonorous rhythms which Shaw learned from Ruskin. But the resemblance to Shaw is superficial: that to Nordau is intrinsic. Their bill of hates is, allowing for the lapse of time, the same. Where Nordau attacked Pre-Raphaelitism and Impressionism in painting, Lewis attacks Post-impressionism; where Nordau reprobated the waltz, Lewis scores jazz. Both writers anathematize feminism, and the predominance of the feminine in human affairs—but Lewis pushes his attack against the cult of the child and the increasing tendency toward childishness on the part of the play boy classes. Nordau quotes long passages from Maeterlinck and Ibsen to let the reader see how idiotic they are; Lewis performs the same operation on James Joyce and Miss Stein. Nordau sees the road to ruin in increasing sexuality; Lewis in homosexuality.

Mr. Lewis's encompassing thesis, within which his book moves, is that whether we like it or not we are in the midst of revolution, revolution implicit in our increasing control of force by science, a revolution which is at the moment, and may continue to be, bloodless. The guiding of this inevitable revolution is the chief task of statesmanship, to the exercise of which the political dogmas of democracy and liberalism are utterly opposed. This is the intimate thesis to which Mr. Lewis addresses himself. "A capital reason for the political weakness of Europe is the notion of individual freedom as opposed to the greater solidarity of a community working together under a centralized consciousness and despotic, or at all events, very powerful control." This notion of individual freedom rests on the hypothesis contrary to fact that most men desire or are fitted for, or may be educated to use and enjoy liberty, the dogma of nineteenth century liberalism. "All the libertarian cries of a century ago were based on unreal premises, and impulses that are not natural to, and cannot be sustained by, the majority of men. Luxury and repose are what most men undeniably desire. They would like to be as much at rest as if they were dead, and as active and alive as passivity will allow." He gathers plenty of evidence to substantiate this view. For example, the mass of mankind like nothing so much as being classified. "The ideally 'free man' would be the man *least* stereotyped, the man approximating to the *fewest* classes, the *least* clamped into a system—in a word the most individual." But practically "no one wants to be 'free' in that sense. People ask nothing better than to be types—occupational types, social types, functional types, of any sort—for in the mass people wish to be *automatic;* they wish to be conventional; they hate you teaching them or forcing them into 'freedom'; they wish to be obedient, hard-working machines, as near dead as possible—as near dead (feelingless and thoughtless) as they can get without actually dying." Man being what he is, Mr. Lewis questions whether the type of salvation provided by Lord Leverhulme or Henry Ford does not respond more accurately to human wishes than that of Jesus.

Such being the case the art of government should be based realistically on the profound instinct and wish of the great majority of people to be ruled. In recognition of this fact man should be disabused of the feminine notion that freedom and irresponsibility are interchangeable terms, and taught that in seeking the second he must forego the first. "It is easy to show him how extremely disagreeable it is to be in a position of authority, how very foolish it is to desire authority . . . how much pleasanter in everything to be the underdog." On the other hand, a ruling class must be permitted to release itself according to natural selection by virtue of the gifts of strength, intelligence and daring; and since the function of ruling, when its exercise is pleasant, becomes a danger to the ruled, "the ruler should be made to pay for ruling in every possible way"—he should constantly have it brought home to him that "to rule is a painful, dangerous, and arduous duty."

There are two forms of social adjustment which Mr. Lewis sees at the present day as rivals for the support of intelligent men, one furnished by the Soviet government of Russia and the other by the Fascist government of Italy. Mr. Lewis holds that abstractly the former is the better. "It has spectacularly broken with all the past of Europe; it looks to the East which is spiritually so much greater and intellectually so much finer than Europe for

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

inspiration." Yet on the whole he thinks that "for Anglo-Saxon countries as they are constituted today some modified form of fascism would probably be the best." Just how Mr. Lewis would justify this preference on his own grounds it is difficult to see. The Soviet government "springs ostensibly from a desire to alleviate the lot of the poor and outcast." The Fascist government springs historically from a desire on the part of capitalists to preserve their privileges. It would seem to be the finest existing example of Mr. Lewis's account of the current relation between the rich and the poor: "The rich have achieved this awful brotherhood with the poor by bleeding them of all character, spirituality, and mental independence. That accomplished, they join them spiritually or unspiritually in the servants' hall." Moreover, the Soviet government meets specifically Mr. Lewis's stipulation that the way of the ruler shall be hard, while Mussolini and his merry men are only too obviously enjoying the sweets of authority and having the time of their lives. But if Mr. Lewis's effort to be concrete is open to objection, his statement of the ideal government in the abstract is more acceptable—socialism "with as much of sovietic proletarian sentiment as could be got into it without impairing its discipline, and as little coercion as is compatible with good sense."

This type of rule Mr. Lewis sees brought about by a union of the intelligent. He recognizes two chief orders of authority, that of "*natural* superiority" and that of "the organized power of numbers." The intellectuals are of the first. Their weakness in practical matters is due to their division and to their scorn of the very principle of their strength. "Why," laments our author, "as Sorel and a multitude of the intellectuals have done, should they repudiate each other with every resource of invective and hold the 'intellect,' the instrument of all their life and power, up to scorn?" The history of the past is one of this tragic division. "Had the best intelligences at any time in the world been able to combine, the result would have been a prodigy of power, and the result for men at large of the happiest." The hopeful sign of the future, as Mr. Lewis sees it, is that among the mechanical associations of the mass of people into clans, societies, clubs, syndics and classes, the intellectuals will be forced into syndicalism. One may question whether the intellectual by accepting the badge of highbrow and enrolling himself in the hierarchy of Knights and Nobles of the Mind, leading up to the Grand Lodge and Supreme Exalted Ruler, will not thus sacrifice the individualism which is the essential thing about him. And one may question further whether the amalgamated intellectuals will find it easier to enforce their right to rule by the syndicalist device of a general strike, or by using the "organized power of numbers" by entering into coöperation with clans and clubs and seeking control through persuasion. Such control will in the future, in Mr. Lewis's opinion, be accomplished by education, only instead of the rather heady stuff of liberty and equality, he would prescribe the sedative of sensual satisfaction—what the public really wants. Here again, however, he seems to call upon the intellectual to belie his nature, to become a spellbinder, or at best a Jesuit. Again one may question whether the intellectual, by virtue of his trust in the mind, will not be compelled to rely for his revolution upon the method of enlightenment and emancipation, to lead others by the way he himself came, to accept democracy as a technique, if not as a religion.

ROBERT MORSS LOVETT.

Values and Obligations

A Study in Moral Theory, by John Laird. New York: The Macmillan Company. 319 pages. $4.

THERE are two questions that anyone interested in the theory of morals must do his best to answer. One is: What is the good, or—the more modern form—what are the goods of life? The other is: What ought one to do, what are the supreme moral commands? Moralists, as anyone knows, disagree heartily as to the correct answers to both questions. They also disagree as to which of the two problems indicated by the questions is fundamental. One may give a description and defense of moral obligation as the logical foundation of one's system and develop a notion of the good as lying in the fulfilment of these obligations. Or one may find one's natural starting point in some sort of description or classification of goods or values and hold that the fulfilment of our moral obligations lies in the promotion of these goods.

Mr. Laird in his book, A Study in Moral Theory, adopts the second method. To be sure, he says in the early part of the book that his theory deals primarily with the conception of obligation rather than value, but he adds that ethics presupposes a study of values, and holds that "moral excellence . . . consists in the use of opportunities for bringing values about" and that the "justification of duty must be in terms of the values it sustains and conserves."

The belief that the nature of our obligations is dependent upon the nature of values is so common among modern students of ethics that it would be hardly worth while stressing the expression of such a belief in a contemporary ethical work were it not for the fact that the other viewpoint—that which looks upon moral obligation as independent of values—is so common among lay moralists and has such unfortunate implications.

Since Mr. Laird is not an ethical egoist—they are, indeed, rare—he holds that it is one's obligation to promote values wherever found, whether in one's own experience or in another's. In answer to the question: Why ought one to do this? he writes:

> . . . we recognize that the knowledge of good and evil imposes an obligation to act in accordance with such knowledge. . . . The ultimate analysis of moral experience in this matter is simply that the best does command, although its commands may not be obeyed.

At no point does the author try to formulate any more clearly than here a principle to bridge the apparent gap between value and obligation; he seems, in fact, to feel that there is no gap. So his notion of obligation seems peculiarly dependent on his notion of values since it is there we must look not only for guidance as to the character of our particular duties but for the source of obligation itself. He feels no need for a separate principle expressing the moral authoritativeness of values, as does Sidgwick, for example, with his maxim of benevolence.

In his discussion of values Mr. Laird has a good deal to say in criticism of the usual division of goods into means and ends. He points out in some detail that the crucial values in any series may occur long before the end. This is certainly true but, I should suppose, rather obvious. If a resident of Manhattan devotes an afternoon to an excursion to the Brooklyn Museum to see a fine exhibition, the end of the afternoon will be spent in taking the return

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

trip in the subway. But there seems no objection to saying that the end in the value sense came in the middle of the afternoon and was found in the Museum.

The most interesting criticism which Mr. Laird passes on the means-end or instrumental-intrinsic classification is based upon the intimate relation which different elements in a means-end series bear to each other, the way in which one member of such a series affects the other members for better or worse. This, Mr. Laird feels, makes it impossible to judge of an end apart from the means by which it is attained or apart from accompanying circumstances. In criticism of G. E. Moore's definition of an intrinsic good—that it is the goodness which would characterize a thing "if it existed quite alone and if nothing further were to come of it"—he points out that "things that are excellent apart may mix very badly," and that therefore the very things which have intrinsic goodness in the above sense may as a matter of fact never be good in the actual world since there nothing ever is found alone. This criticism seems, however, open to objection. In judging of the intrinsic value of a thing, we must, of course, judge of qualities which are due to prior or contemporary circumstances. We may, however, abstract the value of the thing with these causally dependent qualities from the circumstances, and judge of it, in this sense, alone. Whether or not Mr. Laird's criticism of Mr. Moore's definition is justified, it is certainly valuable since it indicates the complexity and variety of the qualities which we are called upon to judge, something too often forgotten in the desire to simplify the ethical problem.

In place of the notion of ends Mr. Laird suggests that of dominant goods. "A dominant good," he writes, "is one which, irradiating its surroundings, dignifies whatever it touches." These dominant goods he classifies under the headings of truth, beauty, moral excellence and happiness.

The belief in the importance of reflection, of intelligence, not only in considering means but in the choice of ends or dominant goods receives excellent defense in Mr. Laird's work. There is, however, a tendency to identify the intelligent moral life with the conscientious moral life which seems open to criticism. Surely we must distinguish two kinds of intelligent moral activity. There is on the one hand the kind in which we are immediately interested in the values which our behavior promotes, the kind in which our various emotions and sentiments are active though directed towards values as revealed to us by reflection, the kind, finally, in which the cold authority of right and wrong is not felt because it is not needed. On the other hand, there is the kind of intelligent moral behavior in which our predominant if not our sole interest is in doing what is right. It seems to me it is the latter type of moral activity which is commonly called conscientious. But certainly the first type is as moral and may be quite as intelligent.

I think Dewey has somewhere described the sense of duty as a sort of moral growing pain. It indicates that we have not developed certain interests which would enrich our moral nature. If this description is correct there probably is such a thing as a peculiarly moral sentiment—which Mr. Laird is inclined to deny—but it is possible that we suffer from it only when we are not as moral as we should be. Probably the most enthusiastic and successful saints hardly ever experience it. We do not think of calling such people conscientious.

ISABEL LEAVENWORTH.

Brawnyman

Brawnyman, by James Stevens. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. $2.50.

JAMES STEVENS is not one of your journalists, dipping, with a jaundiced eye and a credulous ear, into levels of humanity which know him not, but the real thing. He has worked hard with his hands all his life; even now that he has risen to fame with his version of the Paul Bunyan stories and has become a writer he is still tempted by the knowledge that "there is exhilarating labor and enormous wages in a sawmill half a mile from my door." When he was fifteen he took to the road, worked at all kinds of hard jobs, hoboed his way, fought, went hungry, earned a right to be called a man and get a man's pay. This book, more or less the story of those years of wandering and laboring is usually interesting, sometimes exciting, and also remarkable for a sterling grade of ringing, flexible outdoor prose not often met with in these days.

Though Brawnyman is a series of pages from a real man's story of his own life, there runs through it the flavor, now faint, now very plain, of the Paul Bunyan tradition, the flavor of an enormous, humorous and heroic legend. The framework of the book is evidently true; such things can happen to a man, and no doubt did. But the man to whom they happened was hearty, capable, and a bull for strength; he ate fabulous breakfasts, worked impossible hours, knew violent, primitive men, made friends with many, drank with all, and licked a few: this life, since he was more than equal to it, he paints more glorious than perhaps it was. At least, to scissor-bills such as ourselves, the narrative seems attractively but surely exaggerated in manner rather than matter. Very seldom does one feel that the bare facts have not been rough-housed, slapped on the back and treated at the bar until their color is jovially heightened and their cares forgotten—the same facts actually, but feeling like new facts. Mr. Stevens's exaggeration is largely good humor and high spirits, it is his style, and the style, as is well known, is the man. Only occasionally does it seem to include that slight exaggeration of the imagination feasting upon actual objects, and magnifying, distorting them until their vitality seems redoubled. Mr. Stevens's picture of the grouchy logger, though he is a very minor character, is memorable, and one wishes he had looked at more of the people in the book with the same eye.

The chief character, Gager, does not quite convince us. Gager is an intellectual among hoboes, a man who is always writing things down only to burn them up, who talks in a grand vein, sometimes poetic, more often merely high-falutin'. Try as we may—he is in many ways a most attractive character—it is not quite possible to believe in Gager. He talks too much like Mr. Stevens.

Such criticism may seem ungenerous in face of a high-spirited and original piece of work. But Mr. Stevens is so good that one cannot help wishing him to be always at his light-hearted unquenchable best. Gusto is rare enough in these days when so many of the novels that are written about low life, labor, loneliness and love are as flat and tasteless as a week-old pancake, so let us be thankful for it when it appears. Gusto is one of the most menaced of American traditions; like the buffalo, it was once all over the land, and now shows itself in but a few herds, of which Mr. Stevens's company of labor is one.

R. L.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

New Fiction

Her Son's Wife, by Dorothy Canfield Fisher. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. $2.

MRS. FISHER has chosen a rather novel theme, and one that offers all sorts of opportunities. A repressed, self-virtuous school teacher wheedles her daughter-in-law into invalidism rather than have her grand-daughter grow up under this mother's influence. There are characters here of whom a great deal could be made. Mrs. Fisher has, in detail, many of the abilities necessary to the job: human earnestness, patience, observation, sympathy, a sense of drama, a capacity for taking pains. She cares about her people, she knows them well, she achieves, in a number of places, a truthful intensity, and she offers us one of the most thorough studies of the psychology of virtuous grievance that we have seen for a long while. But the whole thing does not come to life. It never has a chance to: the story is never alone with itself for a moment. The characters, who exhibit at various points a tendency to grow up, are fatally chained to a situation well worked out beforehand. In real life the people create the situation: here the opposite is true. And since no situation, no plot, no human drama is more alive than the people who inhabit it, we are not convinced, we are indeed rather bored. Throughout, there is communicated to the reader a sense of strain and effort. Mr. Fisher is very intelligent and also what is known as a conscious artist, but both brains and purpose are really terribly in her way. As with ever so many serious and able novelists, so with her: relax! relax! one cries out in despair; let things go along by themselves, don't force everything into a predestined groove, take your spurs out of Pegasus's flanks.

Most tiresome of all things heard by those who embark on the brief voyage of reading a novel is the sound, overhead, of the author-captain ceaselessly pacing the bridge in an agony of command over these souls, this little ship.

R. L.

The Loom of the Fool, by Austin MacLeod. New York: George H. Doran Company. $2.

IN The Loom of the Fool Mr. MacLeod deals seriously and honestly with the problem of human freedom. Richard Gordon at the age of fifty is set free from social and domestic control by the death of his wife. He goes to New York to seek experience and to write a novel. One trivial objection to the book is its title. Gordon is not a fool in any episode of his story, and he plays the part of high wisdom in returning to Verden Springs to marry Joan, whom the author planted in the early chapters for that very purpose. A more serious reservation is in regard to the style. It is the ready to wear garment of fiction with all the style-plus features—the self-conscious comment: " 'Gawd forbid that I should argue with a gentleman,' she murmured with melodramatic humility"; the cover design portrait: "His very appearance—tall, a little awkward, with red-brown hair, always tousled, a humorous mouth above a firm chin; and quiet gray eyes which smiled readily—was unusually attractive in a friendly, human sort of fashion"; the thrill: "His blood leaped to the quick bright savagery of her." Mr. McLeod's matter is so much his own that it is a pity he didn't individualize the manner also.

R. M. L.

Almost Pagan, by J. D. Beresford. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company. $2.50.

MR. BERESFORD attacks the same problem of masculine freedom with a bolder hand. His hero, Henry Blackstone, also a novelist of mature years, is not without ties. On the contrary, besides his wife and three grown children, he has his mother and his mother-in-law to complete his family circle. His story emerges through the simultaneous appearance of a girl by whom his son has unconsciously made him a grandfather, and that of a woman who ten years before had made him her ideal and now returns, a widow, to make him her lover. Henry Blackstone works out his real problem of conflicting loyalties with the same psychological thoroughness that he had given to the puppet figures of his novels. Here, for a wonder, the profession of the hero is a genuine factor in his story. The linking of the two occurrences in his life is skilfully managed, and the background of family, tested by its knowledge of the two events, is extraordinarily well done. The chief reserve must be expressed in regard to Mrs. Thurlow—beautiful in conception, she remains ethereal, and when she vanishes like a wraith one wonders if she was ever really there and not a figment of Blackstone the novelist.

R. M. L.

Far End, by May Sinclair. New York: The Macmillan Company. $2.

IN Far End Miss Sinclair presents the purgatorial rather than the infernal aspects of life, and, following Dante, she shows how much more easily evil lends itself to convincing dramatic presentation than goodness. Her portraits of Mr. Waddington of Wyck, of Canon Chamberlain in A Cure of Souls and of Anne Severn and the Fielding brothers are in her gallery what Farinata and Ugolino and Paolo and Francesca are in Dante's. Beside them Christopher Vivart is a rather pallid figure, like Sordello in the Purgatorio; and Hilda becomes almost a symbol of divine wisdom, like Beatrice in the Paradiso. It is true, Christopher does enough of evil to keep him human, but somehow both his betrayals of Hilda, that in the flesh and that in the spirit, seem arranged to promote his salvation. This redemption is not, as it might appear, due to Hilda's ministry, but rather to that of Far End, the beautiful place, the happy place where Hilda exclaims: "I don't believe anything ugly ever happened in it. It'll keep us good." This is the Paradise from which they are exiled by the flaming sword of war, and to which they return to find healing. "It brought them back to themselves and to each other; back to reality, to love and trust and the good happiness of every day, to the kind and simple things that endure forever."

R. M. L.

The Entertaining Angel, by Samuel Merwin. New York: J. H. Sears and Company. $1.50.

MR. MERWIN has the rare gift of telling a story of almost day-dream-like final happiness and simplicity of means, and at the same time of making neither pretensions for its reality nor apologies for its happiness. It is one of those stories which, while you know it to be unimportant and untrue, warms the cockles of your heart in the telling, and wins you over, unwittingly, to a partisanship in the side which is eventually going to prevail. The trick of making the reader identify himself with the people of the book—I

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

NEW MACMILLAN BOOKS

Distinguished Fall Fiction

Trail Makers of the Middle Border
by Hamlin Garland

Hamlin Garland has written another classic of pioneer life on the American frontier in the decade concluding with the Civil War. The strenuous life of Richard Graham makes a fresh and vigorous story. *Illustrated.* $2.50

You Can't Win
by Jack Black

Harry Leon Wilson says: "I read the story in two absorbed sittings and found myself at the end wanting more. I have read a lot of novels lately, but have not found one that held me as this did." $2.00

Goodbye, Stranger
by Stella Benson

A clever novel by one of the cleverest of women writers. English and American characters against a background of China give Miss Benson an oportunity for her unusual powers of character portrayal. $2.00

The Chariot of Fire
by Bernard DeVoto

A dramatic story of religious fanaticism, told with great power and unsparing realism. $2.50

The World That Was
by John G. Bowman

This story of the little boy's world is told in such a natural, tender way that it is irresistible. Quite the most wistful picture of childhood since "When We Were Very Young." $1.25

Far End
by May Sinclair

"Concise . . . Brilliant. The book is clothed with life and understanding." — *Harry Hansen in New York World.* $2.00

Jig Saw
by Eden Phillpotts

In which an absorbing murder mystery is unraveled in an interesting and original manner. $2.00

King Goshawk and the Birds
by Eimar O'Duffy

This fantasy is the first book by a young Irish writer. It is pungent with wit and spiced with satire, much in the manner of James Stephens' work. $2.50

Indian Tales and Others
by John G. Neihardt

Tales that have fidelity to Indian nature and history—full of the vigor of the vanished frontier and the color of aboriginal life. $2.50

The Blatchington Tangle
by G. D. H. and Margaret Cole

A murder and attempted robbery in an English country house and the entanglement of guests in the mystery make an engrossing tale by the authors of "The Death of a Millionaire." $2.00

A Guide to Historical Literature
by the Committee on Bibliography of the American Historical Association

A selected, classified, critical bibliography of the whole field of history. Special attention has been given the needs of historical students, librarians and general readers. $8.00

Poetry and Drama

Sara Teasdale

Dark of the Moon

Lovers of Sara Teasdale's delicately wrought lyrics will welcome this first volume of poetry from her pen in five years. $1.50

James Stephens

Collected Poems

A beautiful edition in which all of James Stephens' poetry is brought together for the first time in one volume. $3.00

Edgar Lee Masters

Lee: A Dramatic Poem

An original and powerful dramatic presentation of the Civil War and General Robert E. Lee, by the author of "Spoon River Anthology." $2.00

John G. Neihardt

Collected Poems

Poems previously published under the titles of "The Quest" and "Two Mothers" are included in this collection with Neihardt's three epic poems of the west. $4.00

Thomas Hardy

Collected Poems

This new volume contains all of Hardy's poetical work, including "Far Phantasies, Songs and Trifles." $4.00

A Short History of Marriage
by E. A. Westermarck

Based on the fifth edition of the author's famous "The History of Human Marriage," this entirely new work deals in one volume with marriage strictly as a social institution. $5.00

Business Cycles and Business Measurements
by Carl Snyder

A scientific and scholarly work, based on investigations and research by the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, of which the author is General Statistician. $6.00

Prohibition at Its Worst
by Irving Fisher

A candid examination of the facts about prohibition by a distinguished economist. It tells the inside story of the Eighteenth Amendment for the first time, and contains a wealth of information on both sides of this important national question. $2.00

Prices subject to change on publication

Boston New York Chicago **THE MACMILLAN COMPANY** Atlanta Dallas San Francisco

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

suppose it might be called that. But in Mr. Merwin's case it is something a good deal better than a trick. This extremely simple tale of wayside players in California has merit which goes beyond the trick, and a low-voltage, though none the less genuine sincerity. Mr. Merwin writes so well, and builds up his characters so quietly, and also so permanently that one wishes he would pick on a larger theme. Oh, you know, one of those worth-while themes—adultery in the Middle West, or ill-health in Kansas, or theft in Ohio, or misunderstood childhood on the lower Mississippi—in which our country abounds, and its writers delight. Thank God, after all, that Mr. Merwin is only a story-teller, and a good one at that. R. L.

Listen, Moon! by Leonard Cline. New York: The Viking Press. $2.

IF the moon should listen, which is unlikely, she will be very mildly amused, and she may also feel some of that embarrassment which comes over people watching other people trying hard to be uproarious. Mr. Cline lacks the necessary abandon for this sort of whimsical rough-house, though he has other qualities suitable to other occasions. A professor of Latin, a flapper, a would-be Governor, a matronly but loving housekeeper, a Blue Methodist, all these elements, fetched so far and yet so near, are shaken up in a pirate ship along Chesapeake Bay, shaken and shaken and shaken again, like a cocktail which never will get cold. The rickety story, so evidently the product of a "fanciful" imagination, is told better than it deserves, and would distress us less perhaps if it were told worse. The man who is the first to laugh at his own jokes is not noticeable so long as the jokes are funny; the author who begins his sentences with a facetious, promissory smile must deliver the goods or be rewarded with a yawn. R. L.

A Manifest Destiny, by Arthur D. Howden Smith. New York: Brentano's. $2.50.

MR. HOWDEN SMITH'S perennial Ormerod family filibusts into flower again in the years just preceding the Civil War, when Peter the second of that name joins William Walker in his Nicaragua expedition—one of the many fantastic attempts at Central American expansion of our place-in-the-sun-seeking forebears. The stark history of the period is high-grade ore of romance, and when an expert like Howden Smith smelts it into fiction the result is pure bullion. This tale is as simple and objective as a bar of silver—an unfamiliar and rather thrilling form of imaginative wealth, suggesting indefinite romantic origins. The first decade of this century supposedly marked the passing of the "historical romance," but occasional revenants, tenacious of literary life, appear and surprisingly quicken our matter-of-fact breathing with recitals of danger and derring-do, and this last of Mr. Howden Smith's contributions to the immortal tradition is throughout some 500 pages a very lively and convincing spook. D. B. W.

The Painted Room, by Margaret Wilson. New York: Harper and Brothers. $2.

THE PAINTED ROOM is the work of another of those honest substantial talents of which we can say, they will go farther, but not very far. We leave it to readers of all three books whether The Painted Room is an advance upon The Able McLaughlins and The Kenworthys. In itself a warm-hearted, competent chronicle of a girl's mistake, it makes us, as do so many novels, impatient of what it might have been. Martha is in many ways an unusual novel-girl, brought to life here and there with uncommon affection and understanding, but curiously broken in two. Before her error—which we may be permitted to believe this particular girl would not have committed—she was one kind of a person; after it, she seems to be a different one altogether; seems to be changed more than emotionally, right out of her first identity. We suspect that Miss Wilson started out to prove something and changed her mind. The incredible hasty happy ending indicates that her purpose, whatever it was, wilted before the end. Even so, she is bound to be held up as one of those who have probed the heart of modern youth and found it brave but silly, whereas in fact she is only writing one more novel with people in it some of whom come to life, but most of whom do not, and proving that she can at times write with uncommon force and sympathy.

R. L.

The Music From Behind the Moon, by James Branch Cabell. New York: John Day Company. $6.

IN the first book published by the John Day Company James Branch Cabell's short story The Music From Behind the Moon is presented in almost ideal form. The slim, dark volume with its sumptuous paper, wide margins and distinguished typography is still further adorned by the highly decorative wood engravings of Leon Underwood, which translate into vigorous and elegant pattern the tale of Madoc the Musician.

We see young Madoc the songmaker bamboozling Sargatanet, the Master of the Waste Beyond the Moon, to carry off Ettarre, whose music, made upon her heartstrings, had bewitched his dreams. We hear of Ettarre brought back to earth and hearth and children, and of her skirling, moon-haunted music silenced and all but forgotten. And last, of old Madoc, world-honored bard, wandering away from the fame of his human songs after the music which no other now heard—the music "full of doubtfulness and discontent . . . always yonder, always just ahead . . . and which a vagabond alone might be following after always, as was his allotted doom." The tale emerges a wistful parable, despite the inevitable rakishness that characterizes the quest of any Cabellian graal. The poetic note is dominant and the refinements of the format combine with the substance of the tale to make the book harmonious and satisfying—an artistic achievement for publisher as well as author. D. B. W.

Contributors

ELIZABETH SHEPLEY SERGEANT is author of French Perpectives and Shadow Shapes. A. A. Knopf will publish early in 1927 a collection of her contemporary portraits, of which the series that has been appearing in the New Republic will form a part.

GEORGE O'NEIL is one of the editors of The Measure.

JOHN DEWEY, philosopher, educator, and author of many books on philosophy and education, is professor of philosophy at Columbia University.

ADELAIDE MOREY KELLOGG sends this article to the New Republic from Sandwich, Ill.

JOHN CROWE RANSOM is associate professor of English at Vanderbilt University.

ISABEL LEAVENWORTH is a lecturer in philosophy at Barnard College.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED